

READER

PLUS:

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Our first-ever mayoral candidate questionnaire

You wrote the questions. They answered.
In 19 days, you'll cast the votes. 8

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

FRIENDS,
I'm writing to you from Beloit, Wisconsin, just a few miles north of the Illinois border, where I have been invited to college up some of the youths of America for a few weeks. I have a class, and the students are great. Brilliant! Hilarious! But I always forget how eager young folks are to establish their place in the world, to assess an idea in terms of how much it conforms to their still-forming visions of the world, so as to differentiate themselves—from their classmates, their families. Mostly these days I find myself hewing toward the opposite direc-

tion: letting my own vision of the world go slack to better enfold new ideas into it. Not to assess anything but to query an idea, to jump inside it, to see how it might stretch and where it could crack. I spend my days trying to convince them that testing out new ideas is like intellectual gymnastics, a fun way to spend a day, totally free of potential to cause serious damage.
Then a new mayoral candidate questionnaire hits my inbox. And I remember well that feeling of hell no.
We've reprinted the questionnaires for you in this issue, so you can remember that feeling too.

Eight mayoral candidates, answering questions we crafted with you and nonprofit civic journalism lab City Bureau. We held the candidates to the queries as posed (although you can read their responses to the full questionnaire online) and asked questions that we believe could point this city toward the kind of culture we want: a safe, vibrant, diverse, and happy one. Of course we've also jammed the rest of the issue chock-full of the kind of cultural events you love.
So at least something on these pages will give you that feeling of hell yes.
—ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE

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CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

The very little bullshit zone

Eight mayoral hopefuls answer questions posed by you.

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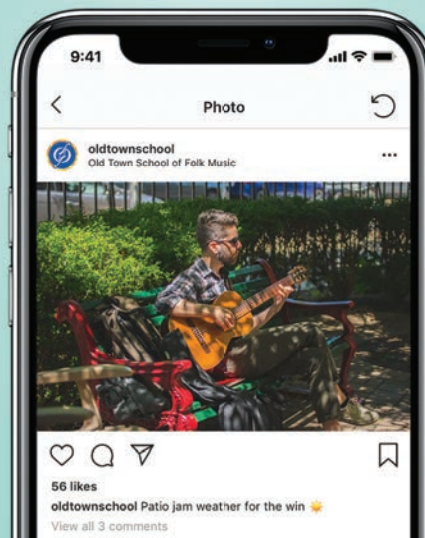
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STREET VIEW

One man's treasure

Digging out gems from the city's dumpsters

AFTER NOTICING TRASH CANS overflowing with furniture and school supplies on move-out day at the University of Michigan, Ian Vamossy was amazed to discover what others left behind. "I found working iPads and iPhones, bags and bags of clothes, ceramics, tools, knickknacks, unopened food," he says. Since leaving Ann Arbor and arriving in Logan Square, the 23-year-old has continued to find treasure—silver jewelry, antique furniture, a busted Marcel Breuer Cesca chair (retail \$1,595). His favorite find was a mint-condition Persian rug with a \$3,000 price tag still attached. The rug is in his living room today.

Vamossy found his ushanka hat adorned with the U.S. Post Office logo in a Gold Coast dumpster. "The USPS is a valuable public service, and it's a really warm hat," he says. He first patched the holes in his bomber jacket with fabric ripped off an old couch. Then he added more patches to add some color. It's a work in progress.

Vamossy studied geology in college and is against wasteful consumption. He casually throws out environmental statistics—the average American throws away 80 pounds of clothing every year; buying a new polyester shirt increases total global petroleum consumption. Being environmentally conscious doesn't mean Vamossy isn't fashion conscious. Though he avoids buying clothes new (with the exception of underwear and socks), he favors the DIY spirit of the 70s and patterns that aren't strictly gendered: "I like the subversion of the hypermasculine into something more colorful." —ISA GIALLORENZO

SIGHTSEEING

The mayor's assassin

Revisiting a murder in the White City



Patrick Eugene Prendergast, from *Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of New York*, 1895

PATRICK EUGENE PRENDERGAST shot and killed Chicago mayor Carter Harrison Sr. on October 28, 1893, in the mayor's home at what is now a parking lot at 333 S. Ashland. The delusional Prendergast, obsessed with writing postcards, believed that the mayor owed him a political office.

Prior to the 1892 elections, 25-year-old Prendergast, a newspaper distributor, filled postcards with his cramped handwriting and sent them to prominent members of society. He urged them to vote for Harrison, who was running for his fifth term. Criminal defense attorney A.S. Trude received a postcard from Prendergast dated November 28, 1892. It began as a sympathy card for a recent minor accident Trude had suffered but included the left-field question, "Have you ever saw the picture of the fat man who looked for his dog while his dog was at his feet and still did not have the wit to see what was the matter—have you observed the cat?"

Nearly a year later, Prendergast visited City Hall under the delusion that Harrison had appointed him as corporation counsel. Insistent, he eventually badgered a clerk into bringing him to the current counsel, Adolph Kraus. Kraus displayed Prendergast to the office and taunted him by asking if he would like the job there and then. Prendergast declined and left.

On the day of the assassination, Prender-

gast bought a six-chamber .38 revolver, a model that had a tendency to misfire, so he kept the chamber under the hammer empty. At 7:30 PM, he showed up at Mayor Harrison's home. According to Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City* (2003), a maid, Mary Hanson, asked him to return later because the mayor was taking a postdinner nap. (Harrison took pride in making himself available to the people of Chicago.) Prendergast returned at 8 PM and shot Harrison three times. A half hour later, Prendergast turned himself in at the Des Plaines Street police station.

That year, Chicago hosted the World's Columbian Exposition, the World's Fair dedicated to Columbus's arrival in North America in 1492. The October 30 closing ceremony was canceled and replaced with a funeral procession for Harrison. At 4:45 PM, the warship *Michigan* saluted the late mayor with its cannon.

Prendergast's trial took place in December 1893. The prosecutor was the same A.S. Trude who'd received the strange postcard about the picture of the fat man. The defense attempted an insanity plea. However, the care that Prendergast had taken in leaving an empty chamber in the gun indicated to the jury that he was too rational to be declared insane. The court issued a guilty verdict. Prendergast was hanged on July 13, 1894. —JOE MASON

artist, writer, performer?

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NEWS & POLITICS



POLITICS

Sex, Viagra, and zoning

The many lives of Alderman Danny Solis

By BEN JORAVSKY

As I've watched Alderman Danny Solis escape one precarious predicament after another over the last 30 or so years, I've reached the obvious conclusion—the man's got more lives than a cat.

It isn't just his ability to fall from vast heights and land on his feet. He's also the rubber-band man of Chicago politics, effortlessly bending into whatever configuration he needs to be in at any moment in time.

But having read the slimy details of his latest predicament, I must conclude that all those twists and turns may have finally caught up with Danny.

As you probably know by now, Solis achieved an impressive daily double in corruption. He was a mole for the feds, wearing a wire to gather dirt on Alderman Ed Burke, and he himself was a target of federal investigators. They listened to thousands of hours of his phone conversations as he talked about

swapping his approval on zoning requests for Viagra. Man, just when I thought I'd heard it all in regard to corruption in Chicago...

As I wait for the next chapter in his saga, I figure it's a good time to sort through a few of the many lives of Danny Solis.

Community organizer: We first met at a restaurant in Pilsen in 1982. Solis was part of a fledgling Alinsky-style group called the United Neighborhood Organization. He reminisced about his radical days in the 60s, hanging with the Black Panthers, and boldly bragged about building a coalition of whites, blacks, and Hispanics that was unafraid of the Democratic machine. In fact, UNO had recently opened a satellite group in the Back of the Yards—Ed Burke country. That's called irony.

Hispanic empowerer: Several years later, we met at the same restaurant. This time there was no more talk of hanging with the Panthers. Harold Washington was mayor, but Solis said just because the mayor was a black man ➔

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continued from 5

didn't mean Hispanics had to back him. Hispanics, he said, should play one faction against the other to get goodies from both. I had a feeling this was his first step toward ditching black people altogether—like he'd figured out that, even with Harold in power, the safest long-term bet was on the white guys.

Daley ally: Washington died in 1987. In 1989, Richard M. Daley was elected mayor. For the next 22 years, Solis was a key player in Daley's machine—blacks *and* Hispanics be damned. In 1995, Solis testified for the demolition of the old Maxwell Street market even as outraged Mexican-American vendors booed and hissed and called him a “gusano” (worm). The developers got millions of TIF dollars to build an upscale community, the vendors got run out of business, and working-class people got priced out of Pilsen as the gentrification of the near south and west sides roared on. And Danny? He got a promotion.

Alderman: In 1996, Ambrosio Medrano pleaded guilty to taking bribes and stepped down as alderman of the 25th Ward. Mayor Daley named Solis to fill the vacancy. Solis became one of Daley's most loyal rubber-stampers in the City Council, voting for just about every mayoral initiative—the parking meter sale, TIF deals, you name it—as campaign contributions from city contractors poured into his coffers.

Zoning chair: In 2009, Daley made Solis chairman of the zoning committee, a prized council position because it brings developers before you looking for zoning changes. Even more campaign donations poured into his coffers. The Democratic Party assigned its top election lawyers to defend him against ballot challenges. But all this clout and power had a price. As he sided with developers over community groups, Solis lost support in Pilsen. In 2007 and 2011, he lost the Hispanic vote to Cuahutemoc Morfin, his challenger. But he won reelection thanks to big support from Chinatown and Little Italy—so much for Hispanic empowerment.

Retiree: In November, Solis announced he wouldn't run for reelection, telling reporters, “I just felt it was time for me to focus a little bit on my family, myself, my grandkids, my son, who is going into college this year. . . . It's time to enter a new chapter in my

life and pass the baton of public service to another. . . . I have no embarrassment. I'm proud of what I've done in Pilsen.”

Mayor Rahm was effusive in his praise. “Danny Solis deserves the thanks and congratulations of our entire city after a lifetime of public service. . . . I will forever look fondly on the eight years Danny and I served this great city together, and while the simple view may be that he was an ally on City Council, the reality is much more. Danny is a friend.”

Well, you know what happened next.

In late January, the *Sun-Times* revealed that Solis had been wearing a wire on Burke, and that the FBI had listened in on thousands of Solis's cell phone conversations. Among other things, the feds had recorded the following exchange between Solis and Roberto Caldero, an old ally . . .

Solis: I want to get a good massage, with a nice ending. Do you know any good places? [Caldero says he does.]

Solis: What kind of women do they got there?

Caldero: Asian.

Solis: Oh, good. Good, good, good. I like Asian.

So much for stepping down to spend more time with his family.

On Tuesday, Mayor Rahm released another statement regarding Solis—and gone were the gratitude, praise, and talk of friendship. Instead, Rahm got right to the point: “Alderman Solis has communicated with my office his intent to resign as chairman. I commend him for making the right decision.”

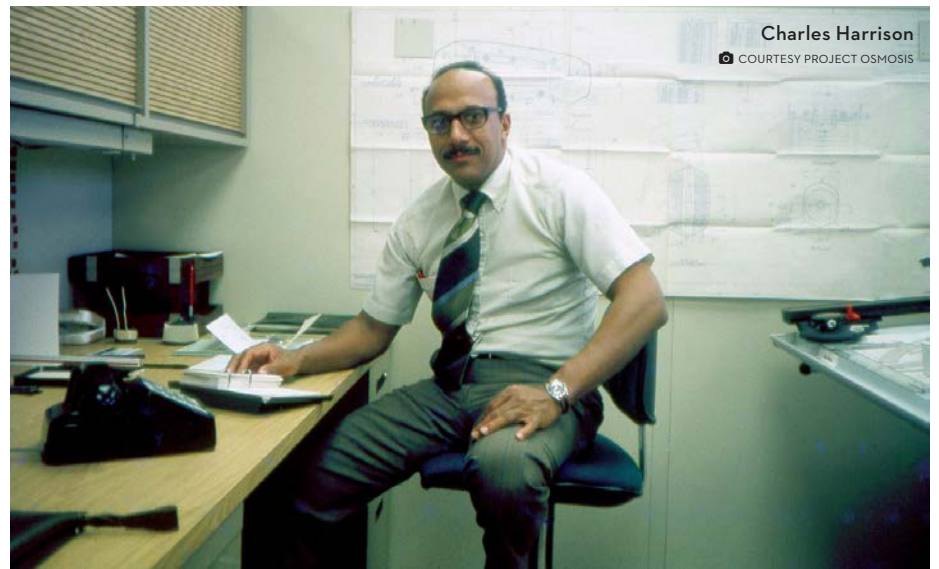
And so the mayor threw his old friend—the one who “deserves the thanks and congratulations of our entire city”—under the bus. He couldn't get the 78 and Lincoln Yards TIF deals through the zoning committee with Solis at its helm. So bye-bye, old friend.

Even with Solis out of the picture, Mayor Rahm still might not get those TIF deals confirmed—what with all the talk about Burke, wire wearers, and Viagra.

If those deals go down in part because Solis embarrassed Rahm, you can say Danny did everyone a favor.

You know, just thinking about this—I've got a feeling that somehow, someday, Danny Solis might once again land on his feet. 

 @joravben



ON CULTURE

Remembering Charles Harrison

A tribute to the man who designed the View-Master, the Dial-O-Matic, and the plastic garbage can—and became the first black executive at Sears.

By DEANNA ISAACS

I couldn't dial up industrial designer Charles Harrison to interview him for this story. The man behind the ubiquitous plastic trash can, the futuristic 3-D View-Master, the beehive-bonnet Jiffy-Jet hair dryer, and so many more irresistible versions of familiar 20th-century products died November 29 in Santa Clarita, California, where he'd lived for the last few years, at the age of 87.

But on a late-January Sunday at the Chicago Cultural Center—where a fraction of Harrison's vast body of work is on display as part of the “African American Designers in Chicago” exhibit—so many of his Chicago colleagues, former students, and family gathered to celebrate him that it felt like an introduction.

The first black executive at Sears's Chicago headquarters, Harrison was a pioneer and a consummate professional, said Zoë Ryan, the Art Institute's curator of architecture and design. “Someone I could look up to and aspire to be like,” said Design Management Institute president Carole Bilson. A really supportive parent, said his son, composer and conductor

Charley Harrison, director of the UCLA Jazz Orchestra. “An incredible nurturer” and—a telling choice of words—“a winsome man,” said Michael Saubert, a Harrison mentee and the current director of industrial design for Sears Kenmore appliances.

As a designer and, ultimately, the head of Sears's design lab, Harrison was a shaper of products. A proponent of the “form follows function” aesthetic, he eschewed froufrou, found beauty in functionality, and gave the everyday objects used by millions of Americans a sleek, modern appearance.

Born in Louisiana in 1931 and raised in Texas and Arizona, where his father taught industrial arts at the only black high school in the then segregated state, Harrison was a smart kid, but he struggled with what was later diagnosed as dyslexia, and floundered as a 16-year-old economics major at the City College of San Francisco. After aptitude testing pointed him toward art, he wound up in industrial design at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he flourished, though he was the only black student in his classes. He graduated

NEWS & POLITICS

from SAIC in 1954 and was drafted into the army, serving two years as a mapmaker in Germany. Returning to Chicago, he started evening classes toward a master's degree at IIT; married the love of his life, Janet Simpson; and tried, without success, to find a job. He could freelance, but no one in Chicago seemed to want to put a black designer, no matter how talented, on staff.

In his 2014 memoir, *A Life's Design*, Harrison wrote that in his initial attempts to get hired at Sears, which was then the nation's largest retailer, an unusually frank manager told him there was an unwritten policy against hiring black people. He finally landed a job with Henry Glass, who'd been his professor and mentor at SAIC and had his own practice. Harrison subsequently worked for two other small shops, Edward Klein & Associates and Robert Podall Associates, proving himself on everything from early transistor radios and a significant redesign for the View-Master to barber chairs and the Dial-O-Matic food cutter before Sears decided it could hire him after all in 1961. At the start of what would turn out to be a globe-trotting, 32-year-long career at Sears, he was happy to be there, he wrote in *A Life's Design*, "although I encountered a lot of racism, which came from every direction."

The racism ranged from frequent, mostly oblivious comments to confrontation by security for walking while black on the corporate campus—after working there for more than

a decade. In another instance, when a theft occurred in his building, Harrison recalled, he was among the first to be investigated: "I couldn't find anybody else who had been checked except a couple of women in the home economics lab. It was just them and me, the only black guy."

"Over time I became more accepted," Harrison wrote, "although until the day I left Sears, I was always reminded that I could not take my guard down, that I was in a hostile environment every day. Every day!"

At Sears, he designed hundreds of products, including Craftsman tools and tractors, hearing aids tiny enough to sit on an eyeglass frame, and those sleekly molded indestructible plastic trash cans that put an end to the early-morning clanging of metal containers on garbage pickup day. The pieces of his work on display at the Cultural Center include a portable sewing machine that simplified threading, two View-Masters, and a lightweight age-of-plastic aqua-blue chair.

In 1992, the year that Sears moved out of its iconic tower to Hoffman Estates, Janet was diagnosed with cancer (she died in 1999). Harrison retired the following year and began teaching part-time, first at UIC and then at Columbia College. When Sears decided in 1997 to cut retirees' life insurance benefits to a token \$5,000, he joined the National Association of Retired Sears Employees, picked up a picket sign, and marched in demonstrations protesting that the company was unfair to its workers.

"We were really an aggravation, but to no avail," Harrison wrote: in the end, the courts sided with the company.

In 2008, Harrison received the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum National Lifetime Achievement Award. At the Cultural Center celebration, under its gloriously froufrou Tiffany dome, UIC professor Stephen Melamed said Harrison was a "rare and important example of everyday design heroism," and a tearful Victoria Matrangola, the design programs coordinator of the International Housewares Association, recalled him as "an elegant man with an irrepressible sense of humor." Then everyone adjourned to the fourth-floor exhibit hall to admire his artful designs for easy-to-handle paintbrushes, automatic electric coffee pots, and the trash cans that bounced, even when dropped from a helicopter. 



The View-Master  PIETERJAN VIAENE

 @Deannalsaacs

THANK YOU.

In last week's *Chicago Reader*, we listed some of the more than 2,400 people and businesses who contributed to our first fund-raising drive. Below are additional names of contributors to this campaign.

Those who gave \$48 or more are now founders of the new *Reader*. We will be taking founder sign-ups through the end of March, and donations are always welcome. See www.chicagoreader.com/support.

If we have inadvertently left your name off this list, please contact snlane@chicagoreadercorp.com.

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EARLY WARNINGS

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READER

You ask, they answer

Chicago's mayoral hopefuls lay out a new Marshall Plan, promise a beefed-up police force, and address shared public spaces—or just ignore your questions.

The following questions were crafted at a City Bureau event with the *Reader* to reflect the concerns of participants who came from diverse neighborhoods in the city. Candidates Gery Chico, La Shawn Ford, John Kozlar, Neal Sales-Griffin, and Toni Preckwinkle were also invited to participate but did not respond. Responses are listed in alphabetical order by last name, and have been trimmed to relevant answers to the question posed. Full responses are available online.

What makes you feel safe in your home? In your neighborhood? In the city?



William M. Daley

© COURTESY WILLIAM M. DALEY

WILLIAM M. DALEY: No one should feel that they can't safely enjoy a summer evening on the front step, can't let their children play outside, or have to worry about a carjacking when they've been sitting too long at a red light. That's why I have proposed improved training for our police and better use of technology, a tough stance on guns to get them off our streets, and a \$50 million investment in violence prevention.

AMARA ENYIA: I'll feel safe in my home when the city's ethos embraces the idea that housing is an entitlement that is accessible, affordable, and of high quality regardless of socioeconomic status, not just in what the city says, but also in what it does. I'll also feel safe in my home when one's address does not put them at a disadvantage in their access to quality schools, viable employment, and functioning neighborhood markets.

JERRY JOYCE: What makes me feel safe is confidence and responsiveness within my community. A true community where residents

are invested in the safety and well-being of themselves and their neighbors. There needs to be trust between the residents and the police officers. Trust that the police officers are committed, concerned, and appropriately responsive. Crime exists and accidents happen, it's unavoidable, but the feeling of safety can be preserved if residents sense that they can trust the police and each other to prevent, anticipate, and respond.

LORI LIGHTFOOT: I have lived in my home for nearly 15 years, and have developed relationships with my neighbors by going for walks with my wife and daughter and our dog Hank, spending time with my daughter at parks, libraries, small businesses, entertainment venues, and friends' homes. This has helped us all develop a strong sense of community.

Every family in Chicago deserves access to the same kind of community anchors that have contributed to the feeling of safety and security I have found in Logan Square. Shared public spaces, like parks and green spaces, quality schools, vibrant businesses,

and libraries all contribute to this, and I am committed to making sure everyone in Chicago has access to these resources in their neighborhood.

Addressing the root causes of violence in our city can help us develop strong and resilient neighborhoods. When people feel literally pinned down by violence and feel left behind and without hope, these conditions are the breeding ground for violence.

GARRY MCCARTHY: What makes me feel safe in all of these categories is the confidence that I am surrounded by a well-trained, disciplined, and community-oriented police force. A police force of officers who are respected and are respectful of residents of every neighborhood in the city of Chicago. This fosters the kind of understanding and cooperation that leads to lower crime and violence, especially in underserved communities that have been overlooked and marginalized for far too long.

SUSANA MENDOZA: I was born in Little Village on Chicago's southwest side. When I was seven, a murder on my block drove my family to leave Chicago. I know what it's like to not feel safe in your own home, and that's why I have a comprehensive plan to address violence in our city so no family has to leave their neighborhood like mine did.

My plan calls for revamping training for police officers so they prioritize de-escalation and crisis intervention over immediate engagement with a dangerous situation. I will also invest in smart policing and reform police governance to help rebuild trust between

police and the communities they serve so our black and brown children feel safe around our officers. And finally, we must do everything we can to improve our closure rate and crack down on illegal guns in our streets to help bring an end to the violence. I am committed to adding 100 new detectives and investing in them with the technology and training they need to do their jobs.

PAUL VALLAS: I am fortunate to live in a neighborhood that is relatively safe, secure, and economically growing. I am fortunate to not have to worry about personal safety most moments. However, the safety of others is always on my mind, for individuals living in communities with much greater economic challenges and where the threat of violence is ever-present. There are too many people in this city who have safety anxiety, even when they sit inside their homes with their families, with the knowledge that a bullet might randomly come through a window.

WILLIE WILSON: If you drive or walk down your street and it is clean, there are no abandoned or boarded up buildings or vacant lots, you know your neighbors, you see a police car slowly drive through and the policeman smiles and waves, you get an overall sense of security. If you drive or walk down your street and it is littered, there's countless abandoned and boarded-up buildings and vacant lots, little to no resources in the area, and police drive by slowly with an antagonistic disposition? You get an overall sense of stress, anxiety, and fear.

Describe what you consider to be the best example of affordable housing in your neighborhood. What will you do to replicate that success?

WILLIAM M. DALEY: *[Candidate failed to adequately respond to question as asked. —Ed.]*

AMARA ENYIA: Oakley Square Apartments located at 2333 W. Jackson. They offer quality-of-life amenities such as a well-equipped fitness studio and a gourmet community demonstration kitchen, among other features. They also feature the unique amenity of an on-site health clinic and wellness program. It offers a variety of fitness classes, physicals for youth, and a local community-speaker series.

I support the following affordable housing provisions:

- Increasing the affordable housing percentage mandate for developers;
- Increasing affordable housing stock for family-size units;
- Eliminating the developer “opt out for a fee” provision;
- Eliminating aldermanic prerogative specific to affordable housing placement; affordable housing should be citywide, not ward specific;
- Increasing and expanding the real estate transfer tax to include economic development uses;
- Lifting the rent control ban; and
- Instituting a collaborative holistic model that tethers homelessness mitigation, substance abuse counselling, mental health services, and veterans’ services to housing.

JERRY JOYCE: The Beverly/Morgan Park area where I live has strong housing values, which is one of the community’s strongest assets. We are fortunate to have an outstanding community-based alliance of civic and business groups known as the Beverly Area Planning Association. They do important work when it comes to housing in our community by monitoring foreclosures and providing resources and information to homeowners facing foreclosure.



Amara Enyia
© ROTIMI KEHINDE

LORI LIGHTFOOT: The John Pennycuff Memorial Apartments affordable housing development in Logan Square will provide much-needed affordable housing aimed at LGBTQ+ Chicagoans in our neighborhood.

The development is a shining example of dedicated people from the community working together to use all of the resources available to create affordable housing: bonds and tax credits from the city of Chicago and funding from the Chicago Housing Authority. The development will consist of 88 units, 100 percent of which will be affordable. Forty-one units will be affordable market units, and the remaining 47 will be CHA project apartments. In a time when our affordable housing ordinances typically only give us 10 percent or 20 percent affordable units, it is incredible to see the dedication to 100 percent affordable units coming to fruition in this project.

To ensure the possibility of projects like this in every neighborhood, there are several things I will do as mayor. As set forth in my housing plan, I will limit aldermanic prerogative by supporting and signing into law the Affordable Housing Equity Ordinance. This ordinance provides that if a development with affordable units is proposed in a ward where less than 10 percent of the rental housing stock is affordable, then the proposed development would automatically go through a streamlined process for approval. In this process, the alderman can help shape the development and request changes, but he or she no longer has veto power over the development or the unilateral ability to reduce the number of units that are affordable. Enacting

a streamlined process would also ensure that good housing proposals do not languish waiting for aldermanic approval simply by dragging them out over long periods of time, forcing community organizations or developers to abandon their plans without ever actually going through the approval process.

In addition, I will seek to amend the Affordable Requirements Ordinance in four ways. First, the amended ordinance will increase the number of affordable units required to be built by housing developers from 25 percent to 50 percent. Second, one-half of the affordable units built will have to be located in the new, market-rate development. Third, affordable units that are not located in the new, market-rate development must be built within one mile of the development, instead of two miles. Finally, the affordable units that are built must include units large enough to accommodate families.

GARRY MCCARTHY: Perhaps the closest and likely best example of affordable housing near my neighborhood is the Margot and Harold Schiff Residences in the near north neighborhood. They not only offer apartments for low-income households but also a good mix of market-rate units. They also are close to public transportation and a good mix of neighborhood amenities. As mayor, I will promote the expansion of affordable housing in neighborhoods across the city where job opportunities and quality schools are a central element in the plan. *[Note: The McCarthy campaign confirmed that he lives in River North. —Ed.]*



Lori Lightfoot © DOUG MCGOLDRICK

SUSANA MENDOZA: I think the best example of affordable housing, though not in my neighborhood, would have to be the work that Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) has done in Woodlawn with buildings like the new Woodlawn Park building on the old Grove

Parc Plaza site. POAH has built community-centered housing that incorporates wrap-around services like job training, all while achieving development without displacement. I think the way to replicate their success is to follow their principles—ensuring that there’s community input prior to development and ongoing dialogue throughout development, a commitment to zero displacement, partnerships with federal and state entities as well as neighborhood organizations and nonprofits, and most importantly, a focus on investing in human capital. *[Note: According to her website, Mendoza lives in Portage Park. —Ed.]*

PAUL VALLAS: The best example of affordable housing is a model that can be brought to scale on a massive level. That model is landlords converting unimproved spaces into high-quality garden-unit apartments. Garden-unit apartments are, for the most part, affordable in most areas of the city where they are located. My affordable housing plan removes obstacles for landlords converting unimproved spaces into high-quality, affordable garden-unit apartments. There is the potential to create well over 150,000 units throughout the city, without city subsidies. Further, the city has over 700 linear miles of empty ground-level retail space. We must explore how amendments to the zoning ordinance could facilitate converting these spaces to residential use, especially that which is accessible for those with physical disabilities. Furthermore, the city controls thousands of unoccupied residential buildings, and there are tens of thousands of other buildings that are in foreclosure or have been abandoned because of tax delinquency issues, which are sitting unoccupied and decaying in the communities. Securing these buildings and turning them over to local, community-based developers, for the purposes of preparing them for reoccupation, along with the removal of obstacles to garden units, will go a long way towards substantially increasing the availability of affordable housing in the city of Chicago. *[Note: The Vallas campaign confirmed that he lives in Lincoln Park. —Ed.]*

WILLIE WILSON: I live downtown, where many large buildings have 20 percent of the units set aside for affordable housing. I would like to see the single room occupancy (SROs) living option downtown that would provide real alternative housing for those who cannot afford much. ➔

continued from 9

What policies would you implement to reverse black out-migration from Chicago?

WILLIAM M. DALEY: I've set an ambitious goal to grow Chicago to a city of three million people. Seventy years ago, there were 3.6 million people in Chicago. Today there are 2.7 million. Since 1980 we've lost 400,000 African-Americans. Some residents moved to the suburbs as housing restrictions in those areas stopped, and that's fine. Unjust housing policies had limited African-Americans' options for far too long. But many residents left because Chicago didn't deliver for them. They didn't feel safe in their neighborhoods. They weren't satisfied with our schools, and the city wasn't affordable.

The first thing we need to do is tackle our crime problem. If we cannot get crime under control, nothing else we do will matter. Then, we need more inclusive growth. Parts of Chicago are doing well, but as a region we aren't growing fast enough, and in too many parts of the city we aren't growing at all. I've committed to advanced manufacturing to jumpstart Chicago's growth, bring investment to parts of the city that need it, and create good jobs that will keep African-Americans in the city and attract new residents.

AMARA ENYIA: A shrinking population is due in part to poor public policy at the overall city level. Disinvestment has been public policy in marginalized communities of color. Therefore, the mayor's first order of business must be to examine demographic trends that will show where we are losing population, as well as where significant investments need to be made.

Second, the city must adopt a true community engagement strategy that seeks input from community members on the status of their communities and options that are available to them. Residents want honest, up-front information that can help them make the best neighborhood decisions. The next mayor must engage in a thorough, bottom-up strategy that arms communities with the information about investment options.

Third, it's time for our city to adopt an equity

framework, especially as it relates to capital and programmatic expenditures. An equity framework would actually mandate that more resources are allocated to communities that need them most. Equity seeks to ensure that residents have access to safe neighborhoods, thriving economies, great schools, and diversity. An equity framework would also declare that all communities should be high quality—not just those that happen to be located in affluent neighborhoods. Adopting this framework would actually make Chicago a more attractive option for many families who see moving out of the city as the only way to avoid the potential of not having the aforementioned options for their households.

JERRY JOYCE: My campaign is focused on improving education, increasing opportunity, and making Chicago safer and more affordable. This means focusing on neighborhood schools, attracting opportunity zone investment, holding the line on property taxes, and restoring police-community trust with authentic community policing.

LORI LIGHTFOOT: In order to ensure that people want to stay in Chicago, we must significantly improve public safety all over the city. Businesses are unlikely to stay in, relocate to, or open in our most violent neighborhoods unless they have hope that there is a plan to bring sustainable reductions in crime. The lack of economic activity ensures high unemployment rates, creates food and medical deserts, and increases the likelihood of flight from the city. We must change our

priorities in neighborhood economic investment to ensure that we are spending taxpayer dollars equitably, and helping to create safe and economically strong communities across Chicago.

We cannot stabilize our schools, neighborhoods, and tax base until we meaningfully reduce crime and violence.

GARRY MCCARTHY: As mayor, I will move aggressively to hold the line on any property tax increases. African-Americans have been forced out of Chicago by those higher taxes, which is why lower-tax locations like Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston are attracting African-Americans from Chicago. I also will launch the most ambitious effort in the city's history to reinvest in underserved communities on the south and west sides. Likewise, I will restore quality education to those communities which also lost a big portion of the black middle class when Rahm Emanuel closed more than 50 neighborhood schools. My plan calls for the creation of so-called "Smart Schools" that will be smaller but will offer a host of educational options, including wraparound services that will make the school the centerpiece of a community. Schools where parents will derive as many benefits as their children.

SUSANA MENDOZA: Black and brown neighborhoods in our city have suffered from disinvestment and disenfranchisement that cuts working families off from opportunities to build true wealth and prosperity. We can reverse this disinvestment in part by intentionally leveraging our downtown success to build an inclusive economy that lifts up our working families. I believe we can put our neighborhoods first by expanding access to capital and support for small businesses and development in struggling neighborhoods, setting our students up for success, from expanding universal pre-K to creating fair lending programs for student loans, and strengthening our working families by fully enforcing our labor laws, increasing the minimum wage, and expanding access to the EITC [earned income tax credit].

We can also do more to intentionally invest in minority contractors. In 2017, Chicago issued guidance that encouraged developments to hire minority- and women-owned contractors. I will make that policy law, and work to expand its scope to ensure returning citizens and participants in violence-reduction

initiatives like READI [a Heartland Alliance program] are included.

And finally, I have a plan to reduce the violence that too often drives black and brown families from our city. My comprehensive plan to address gun violence will hold police accountable by revamping training and investing in community policing, improve the closure rate by hiring more detectives, and crack down on illegal guns through tough gun regulation.



Jerry Joyce

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Garry McCarthy

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PAUL VALLAS: I was the first candidate to present a comprehensive plan to generate massive investment in long-underserved areas in Chicago, particularly areas in the south and west sides. The plan, which I call my Chicago Marshall Plan, will bring immediate and substantial investment to Chicago's most economically beleaguered communities on the city's west and south sides. Unique and significant private investment opportunities in these areas are now available through the 2017 federal tax law, which provides enormous incentives for businesses that invest in opportunity zones. There are currently 133 designated opportunity zone areas in Chicago, the vast majority of them on the south and west sides. There will be strong national competition to attract private investment into economically depressed areas using these incentives. I would supplement the private investments with the city investment of funds made available through the city's neighborhood development and TIF funds. I have specifically called for an earmarking of one-third of all TIF revenues to economic investments in the opportunity zones.

My plan has also called for implementing a "Buy Chicago, Sell Chicago, Hire Chicago" plan in which the \$20 billion in annual spending that the city and its relative governmental

agencies (e.g. Park District, CPS, CHA, airports, etc) control [is put to use] to stimulate economic growth and expand job opportunities in the city's poorest communities. This would mean giving weight in the awarding of contracts or purchasing commodities from companies that are located in Chicago's poorest communities or are willing to partner with companies located in those communities and companies that are willing to hire people from the city's poorer communities (my \$3.2 billion school construction plan allocated 54 percent to minority- and women-owned businesses, and 58 percent of salaries that were paid went to minority workers). My plan also calls for the repurposing of closed schools or other appropriate shuttered buildings into adult education, occupational training, and entrepreneurial centers to provide adults who are high school dropouts, chronically unemployed, and previously incarcerated with opportunities to be trained and helped in securing jobs and to received assistance in starting their own businesses. It is my goal to invest in community-based social services, specifically cannabis proceeds going to the restoration of mental health wellness centers, as well as other social services (legal aid, opioid and drug rehabilitation centers, etc).



Susana Mendoza

© COURTESY SUSANA MENDOZA CAMPAIGN

WILLIE WILSON: I speak often about the need for equality in the distribution of purchasing and service contracts with the city as well as the fair distribution of city-controlled or -influenced jobs. People move to where the work is and where they can afford to live. We must stop the real estate tax increases as well as the hidden taxes like the bag tax, red light cameras, parking tickets, car boots, and the hundreds of nickel-and-dime hidden taxes that make it more and more difficult to live in the city.

How did you meet your top donor? What is their top civic or policy priority?

WILLIAM M. DALEY: I've had the pleasure of knowing Pat and Shirley Ryan for decades. They have made lasting contributions to civic life across Chicago including the arts, education, and youth services. I'm proud to have their support. *[Note: as of February 1, following the Daley campaign's submission of this survey, William M. Daley's top donor is investor Paul Finnegan. —Ed.]*

AMARA ENYIA: Our top donor was well aware of the work I've done in underserved communities. My top donor noted my expertise related to economic development, community organizing, municipal finance, and urban planning. My top donor was well aware that there is not one issue I haven't worked on related to this city. Furthermore, my top donor was captivated with my "bottoms up" approach to stabilizing communities via a cooperative model of economic engagement.

There is no top civic priority. The issues affecting this city aren't hierarchal. The interconnectedness of the aforementioned issues and my understanding and experience working with those most impacted would most likely preclude them from prioritizing one priority over the other. *[Note: as of February 1, Amara Enyia's top donor is Chance the Rapper. —Ed.]*

JERRY JOYCE: My top donor is my wife. We met in college at Yale. *[Note: Joyce's wife is Jannine Caoili Joyce, a Filipino-American physician at the U. of C. —Ed.]*

LORI LIGHTFOOT: My top donor other than myself is my good friend Mary Dempsey. Mary formerly served as the commissioner of the Chicago Public Library, and my wife, Amy Eshleman, served as Mary's assistant commissioner. Mary now serves as the president of DePaul College Prep High School. Mary and I really got to know each other when we worked together to help clean up and bring accountability and transparency to the city's Department of Procurement Services following several major contracting scandals.



Paul Vallas

© SHAUN GILLEN

Mary is a selfless public servant and focuses her time and resources on making quality education accessible to families across the city. I feel honored that she is my friend.

GARRY MCCARTHY: *[Candidate failed to adequately respond to question as asked. As of February 1, Garry McCarthy's top donor is businessman Brian McCormack. —Ed.]*

SUSANA MENDOZA: Building trade unions are my top donors. My father was a Teamster pipefitter who taught my brothers and me the important roles unions play in the lives of working men and women. As a state representative, Chicago city clerk, and Illinois state comptroller, I'm proud to have worked hand in hand with them. I've always stood with organized labor, and was proud to lead the charge with them standing up to Bruce Rauner and his crisis-driven agenda. *[Note: as of February 1, Susana Mendoza's two top donors are union PACs tied at \$250,000 donations, LiUNA Chicago Laborers District Council and Laborers' Political League. —Ed.]*

PAUL VALLAS: Chicago Blackhawks owner Rocky Wirtz has been my largest financial supporter. I have known him and his father since the time I successfully ran the Chicago Public Schools in the 1990s, and they were also supporters or mine when I narrowly lost the Democratic primary for governor to Rod Blagojevich in 2002. It is important to note that his father was a supporter of mine despite the fact that I raised the amusement tax and that their contributions were unsolicited, which kind of goes against the grain. I believe his support is a reflection of his



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confidence of the type of executive that Chicago needs. Rocky Wirtz said as much publicly when asked to explain why he was supporting me. Like many Chicagoans, Rocky Wirtz is concerned about Chicago's financial stability and making the city work for all of its citizens. The investments of the Blackhawks, in conjunction with the Chicago Bulls, have brought substantial new economic activity to the west side and I would hope to build on that. **[Note: the Vallas campaign has confirmed that as of February 1, Paul Vallas's top donors include Rocky Wirtz, via his companies Distillers Distributing Co., Sauk Development, W Sports Media LLC, 35L Sportsman LLC, and Fair Chance Farm, Inc., for a total of \$200,000, and billionaire Koch Foods CEO (no apparent relation to the Koch brothers or their businesses) Joseph C. Grendys, who has also donated \$200,000. —Ed.]**

WILLIE WILSON: I am my own top donor. I have self-financed 99 percent of my own campaign. I have chosen to handle my campaign this way so that I will not be beholden to big corporation, special interest, or political party—only accountable to the people I will serve.



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So much money flows through Chicago, but the already wealthy tend to keep it. How will you implement progressive taxation?

WILLIAM M. DALEY: The city has regressive taxes and a fine structure that tries to fill budget holes on the backs of low- or moderate-income residents. Given the size of our budget challenges, I'm considering all revenue options, including a progressive real estate transfer tax. I will create a graduated fine and fee structure for city stickers, reform fines and fees, and support a progressive state income tax.

AMARA ENYIA: I would pledge my support for the state legislature moving away from a flat income tax to a progressive one. A flat income tax rate has a regressive impact on moderate-income populations and absolves high-income populations from having to pay what they ought to in the spirit of equity. We anticipate the policy platform and prospective legislation of the incoming gubernatorial administration and state legislature to be far more sensitive to the needs of everyday Chicagoans, particularly as it relates to a progressive income tax [and] community-based economic and social-enrichment programming than those preceding them.

JERRY JOYCE: I oppose any municipal income tax.

LORI LIGHTFOOT: Many of the progressive revenue sources we need that do not unfairly burden working- and middle-class families will need approval from Springfield or require years of work to implement. We must mount an effective lobbying campaign to ensure that we have the tools we need to fund necessary services without taxing working people out of the city.

Obviously, given the current pension crisis and the structural municipal deficit, additional revenue is going to be necessary in the short term and intermediate term. I am open to looking at a range of progressive revenue streams.

We must ensure that a progressive state income tax, which Governor Pritzker has promised he will fight for, will give a fair share



Willie Wilson

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of its revenue to the city of Chicago. I also support efforts to legalize and tax recreational marijuana, though it will also require Springfield approval, and would not bring revenue to Chicago until late 2020 at the earliest. I support efforts to make sure that minority communities that have been ravaged by the war on drugs have an opportunity to benefit from legalization in terms of receiving licenses, placement of grow operations, and jobs.

Finally, in thinking about a Chicago casino, it is imperative that the casino be city owned, and its construction must be used as an economic development tool to benefit people and neighborhoods that have been neglected by city government for far too long. As mayor, I will ensure these groups are involved at every stage of the process, from the design, planning, and construction of the casino to its daily operations. Moreover, I will insist that the casino work with Chicago businesses to create a localized supply chain for goods and services.

In the meantime, I have proposed a graduated real estate transfer tax that would generate between \$80 and \$150 million annually for building, preserving, and rehabilitating housing that is affordable; homelessness prevention efforts; and building and operating new city mental health clinics. Under the proposed progressive rate structure, approximately 95 percent of property transactions would receive a tax cut on the sale of properties. Due to the graduated rate structure, a transaction involving a \$250,000 property would result in a \$1,000 savings and a \$500,000 transaction would result in a \$2,000 savings, while a transaction involving a \$1 million property would result in approximately the same payment as under the current structure.

GARRY MCCARTHY: By working closely with Illinois state lawmakers in pushing legislation

that encourages, if not mandates, the wealthy to pay a greater percentage of taxes, while imposing lower tax rates on low- and some moderate-income earners.

SUSANA MENDOZA: As mayor, I'm committed to bringing budget stability and fully funding our obligations to working families without burdening our middle class with further regressive taxes. I will look to increase revenue by legalizing marijuana and working to pass a Chicago casino. And as the candidate in this race with the most Springfield experience, I will be a staunch advocate for passing a progressive income tax statewide. I will also work closely with [newly elected Cook County assessor Fritz] Kaegi to bring true reform to the property tax system and create a process that is transparent and fair.

PAUL VALLAS: I support making the income tax progressive by expanding the property tax relief tax-credit programs and introducing other tax credits that can provide tax relief for renters and senior citizens. These initiatives would not require a change in the [Illinois] Constitution, and should be included in any proposed increase in the state income tax. I support the current efforts to reform Cook County's property tax system and will continue to push to make sure that Chicago is collecting fair property tax payments from major downtown property owners who appear to be carrying disproportionately lower burdens than recent sales suggest they should. To protect small homeowners, renters, and businesses, I also will cap property tax increases at the lower of 5 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less (it has averaged 2 percent the last five years) and simplify the process to access and/or renew available tax relief programs to help middle- or lower-income families and individuals and older residents. I will move to freeze fees and to reduce punishing fines that are adversely impacting working families. This includes the elimination of the red-light cameras that helped drive thousands of Chicago residents into bankruptcy and the capping of fines so that no fine will exceed the cost of the license, the fee, or the ticket. I will also create stability and predictability for Chicago's taxpayers.

WILLIE WILSON: *[Candidate failed to adequately respond to question as asked. —Ed.]* ❏



The Full Slab; Slab BBQ ELISHA KNIGHT

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Smoke is in the air at the Slab BBQ and the Full Slab

Two new barbecue joints shore up south-side barbecue supremacy.

By **MIKE SULA**

The last five years have been terrible for Chicago barbecue. For reasons I still don't fathom, a relentless plague of half-assed new barbecue restaurants multiplied as insidiously as split-face concrete block, and provoked a kind of fury in me that would ignite my hair every time I had to sit down and write about it. This largely north-side problem was compounded

when the great Honey 1 BBQ relocated to Bronzeville after ten underappreciated years in Bucktown, where the Adams family was hounded by condo-dwelling NIMBYs panicked by its sweet porky perfume. With just a few exceptions, unless you were smoking your own, real barbecue was largely only available on the south and west sides at spots like Lem's, Uncle J's, and Bro-N-Laws Bar-B-Q.

Nothing much has changed north of 43rd Street, but in recent months the state of affairs on the south side has improved even further with the opening of two new, similarly named spots from barbecue veterans.

Early last summer the scent of smoldering hickory began wafting over South Shore when James and Tonya Trice relaunched the takeout-only Slab BBQ on 71st after a multiyear hiatus from their original location in Chatham. Operating a classic high-heat aquarium smoker, the Trice family offers a straightforward menu of primarily Saint Louis spares, rib tips, hot links, and chicken that are benchmarks for the Chicago style. Roughly hacked tips and cleanly separated ribs are robustly smoky and markedly tender right off the smoker; links are snappy and bite back with considerable chile heat. As the rules go, these are buried under sauce, mopped up by white sandwich bread and fries (in case you're not axiomatic about sauce on the side). The latter are a departure

from the form. Instead of limp, previously frozen crinkle-cut spuds, these are thick, long, and hand cut, though their bronzed beauty holds up no better in the schvitzzy atmosphere of the takeout bag.

Fried chicken and burgers are afterthoughts, but sides are not, particularly supertender greens, mined with bits of smoked turkey, that still maintain their integrity.

Two miles south in Chatham, Samuel Gilbert opened the takeout-only Full Slab in November, a rebirth of his full-service restaurant in Grayslake that operated from 2006 to 2013 before the recession killed it. Unlike Trice, who learned the barbecue arts from his father in Paducah, Kentucky, Gilbert, an engineer, taught himself, spending his first years conducting R&D on his guests. His ribs and links, cooked on a large Old Hickory offset rotisserie smoker, are meatier, less rendered, and a bit chewier than the Slab's, though they're not nearly as smoky. Same goes for wings, finished on a flaming grill. Gilbert offers a somewhat broader menu, with brisket, jerk chicken, pulled pork, and fried catfish, all of which are sandwichable. His fries are hand cut too, both spots perhaps marking some kind of shift in the usual takeout meat-and-potatoes barbecue paradigm.

The Slab and the Full Slab, though operating in the same local style, each offer some fundamental differences. The Slab's ribs and tips are ideally smoky, and when they come right out of the aquarium they offer a direct hit to the pleasure centers, though they don't hold up well as leftovers. The Full Slab's bones may seem wanting at first—more roasted than smoked—but they have staying power and actually emerge improved after a period of refrigeration. Either way, both stand out amid the citywide scrum. It's always best to attack them straightaway anyway, al trunko, or—if you're indifferent to your fellow passengers' suffering—your CTA or Metra seat.

@MikeSula

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ARTS & CULTURE



Elektra © ROBERT KUSEL

THEATER

RR An anti-romantic comedy just in time for Valentine's Day

ShawChicago turns *Arms and the Man* into a symphony.

When a playwright's words define a world as fully as George Bernard Shaw's, concert readings work just fine. And when an ensemble has been as well trained in the nuances of Shaw's wit as ShawChicago's regulars, it's easy to sit back and enjoy the human badinage. The company's longtime artistic director, Robert Scogin, died in October 2018, but its current staging of *Arms and the Man*, directed by Mary Michell, is a solid tribute to his legacy.

Shaw's anti-romantic comedy follows a Serbian professional soldier, Bluntschli (a delightfully skeptical Bryan Wakefield), who takes refuge during a retreat in the bedroom of a young Bulgarian woman, Raina (Callie Johnson). She takes pity on her recent enemy and hides him with the help of her mother, Catherine (Barbara Zahora). When her father (Charles Stransky) and preening fiancé (Christian Gray) return from battle, complications ensue.

The music stands the actors use to hold their scripts seem extraneous yet also underscore that what we're hearing is a Shavian symphony. These performers know the inflections and have the timing necessary to wring every wry laugh out of Shaw's evergreen puncturing of heroic idealism and romantic fidelity. Toss in Lydia Berger Gray and Gary Alexander as a pair of servants with social-climbing schemes of their own and the element of class struggle also snaps into focus.

It helps that this play doesn't feature the long discourses of other Shaw classics. (Hello, *Saint Joan*!) The sharp, elegant writing comes through with little fuss but obvious affection in Michell's smart staging. —**KERRY REID** *ARMS AND THE MAN* Through 2/25: Sat noon, Sun 1 PM, Mon 7 PM, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn, 312-587-7390, shawchicago.org, \$40, \$35 seniors, \$20 students.

RR A leg to stand on Not even an injured knee can stop Nina Stemme's powerful performance as *Elektra*.

Lyric Opera's 2012 production of *Elektra*, Richard Strauss's one-act powerhouse of misery, set a high bar

for follow-ups. The current revival with a new cast lost its dress rehearsal to the polar vortex and greeted its opening-night audience with an announcement that celebrated Swedish soprano Nina Stemme, making her Lyric debut in the title role, had injured her knee and would have to curtail her movement on stage.

There are plenty of operas in which a more-or-less immobile lead would be business as usual, but not this one. Not only is *Elektra* front and center singing her guts out for almost all of its 140 intense minutes, but, in its strikingly abrupt conclusion, she's required to literally dance herself to death. How would this work?

Very well, as it turned out. Stemme—an accomplished actor and a true vocal athlete—is impressive in her mastery of this marathon role, her voice soaring above the equally impressive Lyric Opera orchestra, expanded beyond its usual ample size to handle Strauss's exceptionally rich and explosive score. The story, with a poetic libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal (sung in German with English surtitles), is Greek myth as turn-of-the-20th-century matricidal psychodrama: *Elektra* won't rest until the murder of her father at the hands of her mother and mom's evil paramour is avenged. Stemme is supported by an able cast, and the entire effort is hugely enhanced by John Macfarlane's smoking ruin of a set and party-in-hell costumes. The dancing was dispensable. Donald Runnicles conducts. —**DEANNA ISAACS** *ELEKTRA* Through 2/22: Wed 2/6 and Sun 2/10, 2 PM; Thu 2/14, Mon 2/18, and Fri 2/22, 7 PM; Lyric Opera, 20 N. Wacker, 312-827-5600, lyricopera.org, \$49-\$279.

RR Chameleon on parade Matt Crowle shines in eight roles in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*.

A good rule for making plays full of gratuitous deaths into comedies is to flesh the victims out as little as possible. When this show's villainous hero, Monty D'Ysquith-Navarro, played by Andres Enriquez, engineers the remorseless killing of all eight members of the D'Ysquith family who stand in the way of his becoming the next Earl of Highhurst, it should feel like the mowing down of quaint little cardboard dolls. And it does. When it won the Tony Award for Best Play in 2014, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* drew frequent comparisons to that iconic Broadway slasher, Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, and with good reason. But it's a different, frothier, less gruesome animal in any number of ways, the key one being that all eight fallen D'Ysquiths are played by one actor, in the case of this

ARTS & CULTURE

Porchlight production, the brilliant Matt Crowle, who steals the show.

Crowle's shifty-eyed charms only make it that much funnier to see his characters go splat, plunk, and kaput. His turn as the philanthropist Lady Hyacinth D'Ysquith is especially unhinged and delightful. He's the first among equals here: the singing in this Porchlight Music Theatre production is pretty much superb across the board—although the prerecorded accompaniment sounded badly mixed to me as it piped in—and Enriquez gives a passionate performance. It's the chameleon Crowle's parade, though; when he gets going, even his scene partners stop and stare. Steven Schellhardt directs, with musical direction by Andra Velis Simon. —**MAX MALLER**
A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE AND MURDER Through 3/16: Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 4 and 8 PM, Sun 6 PM; also Tue 3/12 and Wed 3/13, 7:30 PM; no performance Thu 3/7, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn, 773-777-9884, porchlightmusictheatre.org, \$51-\$66.

RR Lighting in a bottle
The current Goodman production demonstrates *How to Catch Creation*.

Capturing the tortured angst involved in the process of creation is difficult to achieve honestly and empathetically. The inherently selfish act of indulging in creativity and desiring a tangible legacy is viewed with suspicion at best by nonartists, and reviled at worst. Engrossing and meticulously plotted, the Goodman's production of *How to Catch Creation* is lightning caught in a bottle, an absolute triumph for director Nigel Smith and his exquisite ensemble.

Written by Christina Anderson, this joyful and visceral work is alive in a way that very few stage plays achieve. It tells the story of a writer, a few painters, and their struggles to create and establish their legacy. Set against a toe-tapping soundtrack by composer Justin Ellington that vacillates between bouncy 90's pop and easy, smoldering jazz, the delightfully inventive set conceived by Todd Rosenthal provides the cast with a glorious playground. Smartly written and staged dual scenes that merge past and present, creator and consumer, poignantly amplify the blessing and curse of being struck with inspiration.

The all-black cast of six portrays a group of artists who navigate the complexities of enduring friendship and love over several decades. Karen Aldridge is a stunner in a layered role as the strong friend who helps everyone but herself; Keith Randolph Smith is tenderly lovable as a mature man with a new lease on life; and

Jasmine Bracey is deliciously contradictory as a genius writer—a role usually reserved for men. When you don't give creativity or love the proper attention, it begins to fade. The passion in this production was indelibly dyed into my memory after witnessing it. —**SHERI FLANDERS**
HOW TO CATCH CREATION Through 2/24: Wed-Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 2 and 8 PM, Sun 2 PM; also Tue 2/19, 7:30 PM, Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn, 312-443-3800, goodmantheatre.org, \$25-\$70.

Young, gifted, and black
Nina Simone: Four Women could use a lot more of her songs.

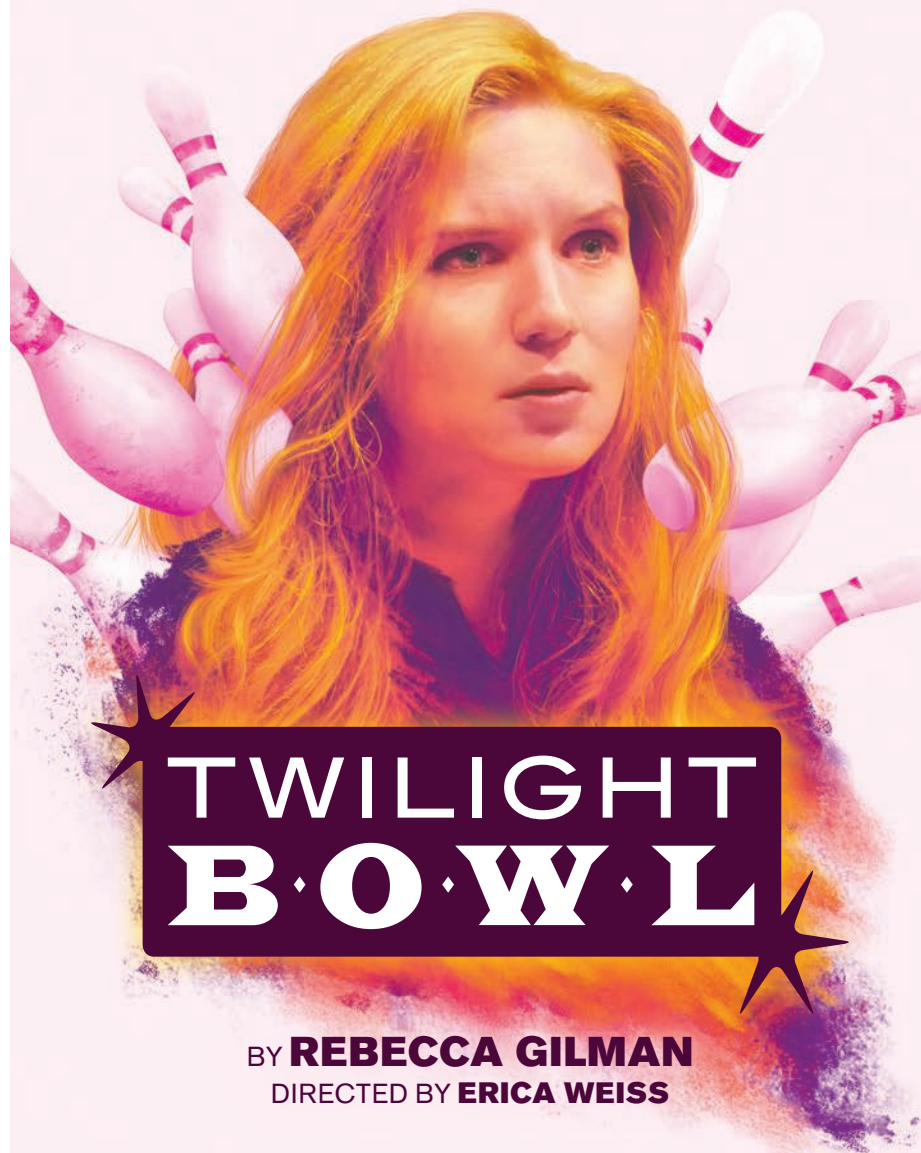
The singer, songwriter, and civil rights activist Nina Simone was a riveting, uncompromising, sometimes confrontational performer. If she thought an audience wasn't paying close enough attention, or if individual members were trying to leave, she would call them out. Some of her songs were equally bracing. Her 1964 song "Mississippi Goddam" was a fiery response to two violent events in 1963: the murder of Medgar Evers on June 12, and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, on September 15. It was banned on radio stations throughout the south—one station broke promotional copies of the album and returned the pieces to the record company—but 55 years later, it still crackles with fire and fury and life—as does Simone herself in archival recordings.

The Nina Simone (played by Sydney Charles) who sings and talks her way through Christina Ham's biographical stage show at Northlight Theatre is almost as riveting as the original who you can see today on YouTube. Charles captures Simone's fascinating stage presence, at once guarded and openhearted, fierce and vulnerable—she's angry as hell if still hoping for something better. But Ham's play, though entertaining, disappoints. In lieu of writing of either a jukebox-style musical revue or a dramatic stage bio, Ham delivers up something in between, a 90-minute discussion of Simone's work and the civil rights movement, interrupted from time to time with songs from Simone's repertoire sung by the cast. These songs, under the musical direction of Daniel Riley, are well rendered, but also a reminder of how wonderful it would be to hear more of Simone. —**JACK HELBIG**
NINA SIMONE: FOUR WOMEN Through 3/3: Wed 1 and 7:30 PM, Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 2:30 and 8 PM, Sun 2:30 PM, North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie, 847-673-6300, northlight.org, \$30-\$78. 

How to Catch Creation  LIZ LAUREN



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ARTS & CULTURE

DANCE

How to build a ballet

The Joffrey premieres a brand-new *Anna Karenina*.

By **IRENE HSIAO**

Praised by Fyodor Dostoevsky as “sheer perfection as a work of art” and prompting Ivan Turgenev to write a letter from his deathbed petitioning its author to keep writing, Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* has captivated readers with its story of passion and adultery since it first appeared as a magazine serial in the 1870s. It has inspired countless adaptations for stage and screen—no fewer than 14 films, nine operas, at least two plays, several television miniseries, and five major ballets, dating from Bolshoi prima ballerina assoluta Maya Plisetskaya’s first choreographic effort in 1972 with a score composed by her husband, Rodion Shchedrin, to recent works by Boris Eifman (2005) and Alexei Ratmansky (2010). This February, the Joffrey Ballet brings an entirely new production of *Anna Karenina* to the Auditorium Theatre, with a score by Ilya Demutsky, choreography by Yuri Possokhov, sets and costumes by Tom Pye, and lighting design by David Finn.

Joffrey artistic director Ashley Wheeler describes a fascination with *Anna Karenina* dating from his experience dancing a version choreographed in 1979 by André Prokovsky for the Australian Ballet.

“*Anna Karenina* contains everything we are as people,” he explains. “We love, we fight, we betray people, we have infidelities. There’s a line in life you can honor. If you overstep the line, your life can become very difficult. We can’t help our emotions as human beings, but there’s a price to pay for everything.”

In conversation with current Australian Ballet artistic director David McAllister a few years ago, Wheeler proposed that Prokovsky’s work needed updating. The two directors decided to enter a partnership, something that is becoming more common when institutions commission ambitious new works. “Today, in the ballet world, you invite someone, and you say, ‘You have three weeks—give me a ballet!’” says Wheeler. “So there’s no area for exper-



Victoria Jaiani and Alberto Velazquez

CHERYL MANN

imentation or development. If we want the art form to keep going, we have to give it the resources. Collectively sharing the cost is a lot more realistic.” With a new endowment from the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation earmarked for the production of new narrative ballets, *Anna Karenina* will be the first such ballet commissioned from scratch by the Joffrey. (It will have its Australian premiere in 2020.)

This partnership has allowed this new ballet the rare luxury of time—time for Possokhov to collaborate on a libretto with Russian playwright Valeriy Pecheykin, time for Demutsky to render a complete score in advance, and

ANNA KARENINA

2/13-2/24: Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 2 and 7:30 PM, Sun 2 PM; also Wed 2/13 and Thu 2/21, 7:30 PM, Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Ida B. Wells, 312-386-8905, joffrey.org, \$35-\$199.

time for the Joffrey’s dancers to work with Possokhov, who has come to Chicago from San Francisco four times since last April to create the ballet, allowing periods for all involved to reflect on the process. “Every day they come to the studio, and no one knows what part they’re going to do and how it’s going to evolve,” says Wheeler, “but you begin at 11:30, and by the end of the day you’ve created something.”

[@IreneCHsiao](https://twitter.com/IreneCHsiao)

"CARAVANS OF GOLD, FRAGMENTS IN TIME: ART, CULTURE, AND EXCHANGE ACROSS MEDIEVAL SAHARAN AFRICA"

Through 7/21: Wed-Fri 10 AM-8 PM, Sat-Sun and Tue 10 AM-5 PM, 40 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston, 847-491-4000, blockmuseum.northwestern.edu. **FREE**



l-r: *Virgin and Child* (France, ca. 1275-1300), *Kneeling Figure* (Mali, 12th-14th century), *Seated Figure* (Nigeria, 13th-14th century) LINDSAY BOSCH/BLOCK MUSEUM

VISUAL ART

Out of Africa

"Caravans of Gold" shows how wide the medieval world really was.

By **LEE ANN NORMAN**

Most Western narratives reduce Africa to a monolith of wanting and lack. Africa is (just) a (single) country. Africa is corrupt. Africa is backward, savage, dirty, diseased—a shithole. Tales of its wealth, innovation, diversity, and history apart from colonization are often dismissed as mythmaking and hyperbole.

A new exhibition at Northwestern University's Block Museum of Art hopes to shift perceptions of Africa in favor of more nuanced conversations about its historical role and importance to the world. "Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa" is the first major U.S. exhibition to explore medieval trade and commerce in West Africa. Fueled by a desire for fine gold and salt, merchants across Europe, Asia, and the Middle East traversed the Sahara, home to several powerful African kingdoms, interacting with the people and experiencing the culture as they purchased their goods. Through curatorial juxtapositions and careful attention to storytelling, "Caravans of Gold" demonstrates the important role West Africa played in fueling

global development from the eighth to 16th centuries.

"Caravans of Gold" presents more than 250 artworks and archeological fragments, both African and European, and spans five centuries and thousands of miles of geographic terrain. From textiles, terra-cotta figures, and text fragments to ivory and cast-copper sculptures, ceramics, and gold coins, the exhibit tells a story of sophisticated and multidirectional trade networks and global interdependence, emphasizing the through lines between language and culture, and proving that the medieval era was not just about knights in chain mail fighting on behalf of their feudal lords.

In development for nearly eight years, the exhibition is an ambitious undertaking for a relatively small university museum like the Block. Normally an exhibition of this scale would appear at a much larger institution, such as the Met or the Art Institute, but Northwestern's multidisciplinary approach to learning and its worldwide connections and influential reach helped facilitate the necessary loans and collaborations to realize it. (The university is also home to the first

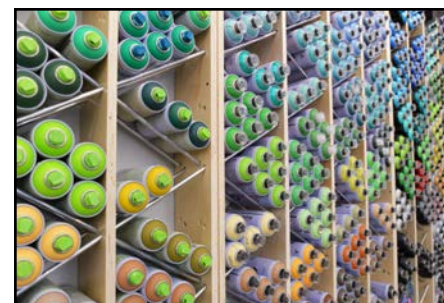
African Studies program in the U.S., founded in 1947, as well as the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies that houses the largest separate collection of Africana in the world.) Support, in part through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the university's Buffett Institute for Global Studies, among others, enabled the Block to consult with partner institutions and archaeologists in Mali, Morocco, and Nigeria and welcome these African colleagues to Northwestern's Evanston campus.

"It was an opportunity to really think about history in a wholly new way and also to ensure that it was not just told by Europeans because the witnesses—the chroniclers—were often writing in Arabic," Lisa Corrin, the director of the Block Museum, explains. "It's a kind of activism, I would say, on the part of the Block and Northwestern to do this, because it [shows] how an exhibition can make a difference and change the way people think about an entire continent."

What remains of the material legacy of medieval Africa is fragmented, which adds to the difficulty of creating a comprehensive exhibition of art and artifacts from the period. Encouraging viewers to rely on an interdisciplinary approach to conjure the material and cultural world of the time—to use the "archaeological imagination"—can spark new ways of thinking about the period. "This kind of interdisciplinary, academic approach has really become the cutting edge of what's happening [in art history]," Corrin adds. "This is an exhibition about beautiful objects. While there are a lot of fragments, they're matched together to make a point about what that past looks like now."

Drawing on recent archaeological discoveries from significant Saharan trading cities, including Sijilmasa (in present-day Morocco) and Gao and Tadmekka (both in present-day Mali), curator Kathleen Bickford Berzock juxtaposes art and objects from the region, including noteworthy loans from partner museums and institutions in Mali, Morocco, and Nigeria, with more familiar medieval artworks from Europe and Asia. These contrasts illuminate aesthetic and cultural connections among the people who lived along the trade routes. "One of the things that is most exciting about the exhibition is that it can't be compartmentalized as an African exhibition or a medieval exhibition . . . it can't easily be pigeonholed," Berzock says. "It is an exhibition that has Africa as its foundation, but ➔

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ARTS & CULTURE

continued from 17

it connects Africa so expansively with a much broader worldview.”

Before visitors even enter the galleries, they’re asked to pause to view a short film, *From Sunrise to Sunset* (2018), created during one of the curatorial research team’s trips to Morocco. Sweeping shots of the desert loop quietly and subtly across the screen, signalling to viewers that they should forget everything they thought they knew about medieval times.

The first gallery focuses on gold and salt, two of the most prized commodities of the time. Maps show major trade routes snaking through the Sahara during the medieval period, linking the cities and towns that served as trading centers. Southern routes connected traders to the Niger River and Africa’s forest region in Mali and Ghana, while routes going north tapped into the vast networks of the Mediterranean Sea and across Europe. Eastern pathways connected Saharan cities to the Levant and to the Silk Roads of Central and East Asia.

West African gold, prized for its purity and quality, served as the foundation for these cross-cultural connections, visible in common aesthetic traits among the art and objects in the gallery. A reproduction of the Catalan Atlas, one of the few surviving examples of medieval cartography, is attributed to the Majorcan Jewish cartographer Abraham Cresques (1325–87) and abuts vitrines of Islamic dinars and gold denarii from the Roman Empire. Its six richly illustrated parchment-on-wood panels show kingdoms spanning from the Atlantic to China and from Scandinavia to the Rio Oro in Africa, including Mali, whose famous king Mansa Musa is depicted sitting on a throne holding an ornate scepter and a gold coin. Wall-mounted Christian icons painted with egg tempera and gilded with gold share wall space with textiles intricately woven with silk threads wrapped in finely spun gold. Folios from prized decorative Qur’ans and Jewish prayer books, both influenced by Byzantine luxury manuscripts, show just how integral gold was to daily life around the world.

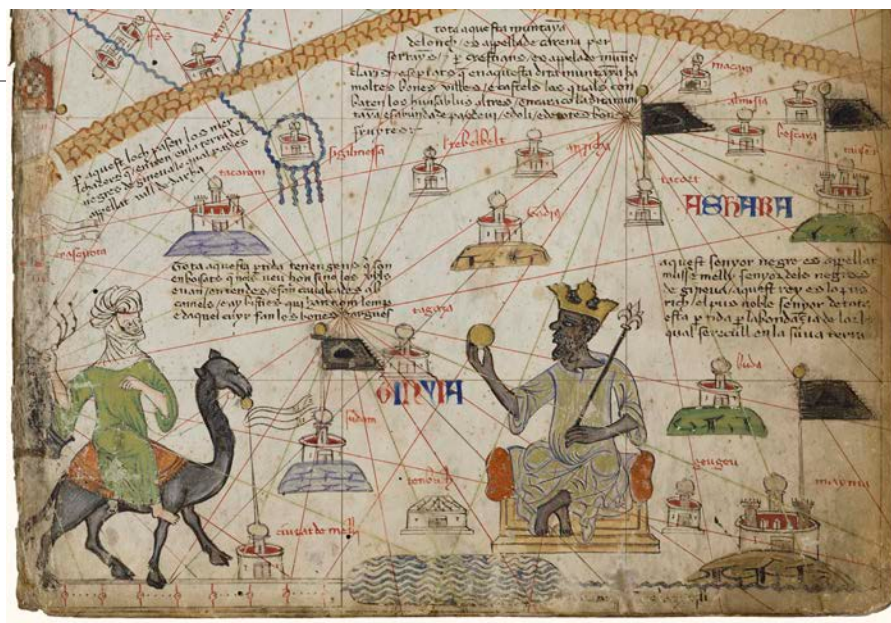
After making a case for the centrality of valuable African goods in global trade, the exhibition makes a literal transition through an arched gateway that recalls the entrance to the ancient city of Sijilmasa on the northern edge of the Sahara. To reconstruct the fragmented material remains of medieval West Africa, this section explicitly juxtaposes archaeological fragments with fully intact artworks. Terra-cotta figures and pottery

displayed alongside tools and vitrines filled with glazed ceramics, small lanterns, beads, and semiprecious stones provide a picture of daily life by tracing the flow of goods as well as visual and cultural information through the region. Small ceramic biconical beads and a 10th- or 11th-century gold bead from Egypt or Syria intricately detailed with filigree anticipate modern examples from Senegal. The section also highlights the importance of the Niger River and Dogon Plateau to facilitating trade: both provided access to Africa’s forest region and served as a gateway between east and west trade routes. A fragment of Chinese Qingbai porcelain discovered at an archaeological site in Mali is shown with a bowl from 12th-century China covered in a stylized flower pattern, demonstrating cultural and material exchange among traders far afield.

A key component of the exhibition focuses on the kinds of stories museums tell about Africa. While much of the material history from Africa’s medieval period has not been catalogued by Western cultural institutions, important artworks, texts, and objects have survived through surprising means. Stunning examples of woven indigo-dyed tapestry fragments that were preserved in caves for centuries, excavated in the 1960s and ’70s, and are now in the care of Mali’s national museum serve as compelling examples of African people recognizing the value of the continent’s resources, history, and material culture, and that they are perfectly capable of caring for their own cultural objects. Displaying these works in “Caravans of Gold” further shifts the narrative of African art and culture to something more than stories of colonial subjugation, erasure, and appropriation.

Throughout “Caravans of Gold,” quotes from West African merchants, traders, and rulers of the time feature prominently along with text fragments giving the perspective of people interacting along these routes. A number of videos installed at strategic points throughout the space provide additional social and historical context about the circulation of culture, language, and goods. One of the last remaining salt merchants in Morocco speaks about his business today and the legacy of the Saharan trade; a scholar of medieval glass bead production discusses the possibilities inherent in exhibiting archaeological fragments with other artworks; another scholar discusses French medieval sculpture practices using African materials.

The videos and texts also provide insight into the spread of Arabic language and culture



Detail of Mansa Musa in the Catalan Atlas. BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE

across northern Africa. A key figure in the story of Saharan trade is the aforementioned Mansa Musa, the 14th-century king of the Mali Empire that reached from the Atlantic coast across present-day Mali and parts of the Sahara Desert. Musa, thought to be the wealthiest person ever to live, converted to Islam, and while making the required hajj to Mecca, visited the sultan of Cairo. A number of writings describe the splendid gifts the sultan presented to him. Those text fragments, in conjunction with 13th- and 14th-century silk and gold textile fragments, allow visitors to imagine what the beautiful robes of honor Musa was given may have looked like. During his travels, Musa’s caravan distributed loads of gold all along the route from Mali to Mecca and back, his wealth and generosity eventually culminating in the creation of the architectural, commercial, and cultural marvel, the capital city of Timbuktu.

The final section of “Caravans of Gold” makes explicit connections to the contemporary world. All of the works from Nigeria in this section are on loan from its national museum system; none have ever been seen in the U.S. before. A showstopper *Seated Figure* from the late 13th or 14th century, is an almost life-size sculpture of a ruler. Tests show the copper used for casting it is likely from the French Alps. In a pointed gesture, the figure is positioned to face an anteroom filled with French and Italian ivory sculptures—objects familiar to those viewers who have seen other exhibitions from the medieval period. *The Virgin and Child* (ca. 1275–1300) from France depicts a familiar scene of a Virgin Mary holding a baby Jesus, but its size, roughly 14 by six

by five inches, indicates that the ivory used to create it is from African elephants, since Saharan elephants grow larger tusks than their Indian counterparts. One can imagine the circulation of French copper and African ivory as merchants traveled back and forth along these routes.

On view well into the summer, the exhibition makes room for a wide range of audiences—archeologists, anthropologists, medieval scholars, history buffs, people interested in art and global affairs, schoolchildren—to reconsider notions of Africa. Corrin explains, “I want to underscore that we are free and open to all, that there is no cost to visiting this exhibition to anyone. We are very privileged as a university, and part of our job as a university is to give back. We do our very best to create an environment where people who may not be used to stepping into an academic art museum on a university campus should be welcomed.”

“Caravans of Gold” creates new points of reference by not only reveling in the beauty of the objects but also introducing viewers to the idea of a vibrantly interconnected global culture, including the sophisticated social, political, cultural, and economic systems of West Africa. So much of Africa’s relationship to Europe has involved defamation, appropriation, and control. Narratives highlighting the agency of West African people in the medieval period allow for a rediscovery of the continent’s rich history, cultures, and contributions to the evolution of global trade and culture. “Caravans of Gold” is an important gesture in helping people understand that Africa has always been connected to the world and can share its story on its own terms. **A**



Carlos Martiel, *Morgue performance*, 2014. © SOOHYUN KIM

VISUAL ART

The messy space of art and life

Caroline Picard looks back at her living room galleries, Sector 2337 and the Green Lantern

By KATE SIERZPUTOWSKI

Sector 2337, the bookstore, gallery, and performing arts venue, closed its doors December 14, marking the end of what its founder and executive director, Caroline Picard, says was intended as a five-year experiment at 2337 N. Milwaukee. Before it became a staple of the Logan Square arts community, it spent nine years in Wicker Park, where it began as the Green Lantern Gallery and Press.

Picard started exhibiting work by friends and local and traveling artists in the front half of her second-floor loft at 1511 N. Milwaukee in the summer of 2005; she soon developed a near-constant run of multidisciplinary lectures, readings, exhibitions, and performances in addition to founding an independent literary press. The artworks displayed in her apartment were offset by a brick wall that held the faded impression of a decades-old advertisement for bitters, emphasizing the Green Lantern's status as a public entity tucked into a private space.

The gallery was initially inspired by an exhibition space Picard's cousin had built in his loft in Baltimore. Picard visited as an undergrad, but her idea to establish an apartment-based alternative gallery was put on hold when she

moved to San Francisco after she graduated college. This notion reemerged when she moved to Chicago for grad school at the School of the Art Institute and came into contact with the social art practices of artists at school and at Threewalls, where she volunteered. The not-for-profit exhibition space and visual arts residency program was established in 2003 in the West Loop, and despite several changes in directors and locations, still remains a site for residencies, exhibitions, and public discourse around underfunded practices in Chicago.

From initial Threewalls founders Shannon Stratton, Jonathan Rhodes, Jeff Ward, and Sonia Yoon, Picard learned that art making, socializing, and commerce could all happen in the same spaces. "[Working with the organization] made operating a nonprofit seem feasible and real, and I connected with the art community through Threewalls," Picard explains. "I knew who would come to my openings if I hosted them. It wouldn't just be a cold call or Bat Signal out into the universe."

In 2007, two years after Picard's first exhibition, she followed in the footsteps of Threewalls and decided to register Green Lantern as a nonprofit. Other galleries tucked into private spaces with limited resources were also de-

ARTS & CULTURE

veloping at the time (although not necessarily with the intention of becoming nonprofit entities like the Green Lantern). Among them were Vonzweck, which was started inside the living room of Philip von Zweck's Humboldt Park apartment in 2005 and stayed open for three years; 65Grand, which opened in Bill Gross's space at 1378 W. Grand the same year and continues programming today on North Avenue; and ArtLedge, an exhibition space resting at the top of a spiral staircase in Caleb Lyons's apartment, which exhibited work curated by Lyons and Brandon Alvendia from 2004 to 2006.

These galleries, like the Green Lantern, were enmeshed in the lives of their owners, sharing space with roommates, partners, and the gallerists' own artwork. "When you have a messy space of life and art, framing is super-important," Alvendia says. (He also ran the alternative space Storefront in Logan Square from 2010 to 2014.) "Do you frame the work in your space architecturally? Socially? With language? The art we were exhibiting wasn't just what people put in, it was the atmosphere that we tried to engender into our community. There is not enough space in the world to accommodate everyone's unique ideas. We were happy to be one small supporter, but we wanted it on our terms."

Picard compares this experimental scene to the work of two Black Mountain poets. Charles Olson, who was known for having a long breath, formulated extended lines of poetry to match, while Robert Creeley, an asthmatic, configured short bursts of words to aid in his reading. In a similar vein, Picard's gallery was her living room, while Alvendia and Lyons had their ledge. A few years later, another pair of artists, Christopher Smith and Irene Pérez, even exhibited artwork in a medicine cabinet in an apartment bathroom. "For me, I have this belief that part of making the best work is figuring out what your limitations are," Picard explains. "You must identify the things you think are hampering you and figure out how to make them useful."

Picard happily allowed the Green Lantern to take her living room hostage until 2009, when the city shut her down for displaying a sandwich board on the sidewalk without a business license. Without a business license, it was also illegal for the Green Lantern to sell artwork, books, and alcoholic beverages under the guise of a "donation," and without a public place of amusement (PPA) license, Picard couldn't sell tickets at the door for musical performances. Although Picard attempted to acquire a business license from the city, she wrote in ➔



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ARTS & CULTURE

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an essay in *The Artists Run Chicago Digest*, it was impossible because her apartment wasn't correctly zoned for commercial activities.

After that, the Green Lantern existed wherever Picard could find space for it. For several months, it occupied the former office of a friend of a friend on Chicago Avenue. Eventually, starting in 2011, Picard decided to eschew visual art exhibitions in favor of the occasional salon-style public program, conversation, or reading at the original site, which she now shared with her husband, Devin King. In 2014, Picard and King moved the Green Lantern into Sector 2337 as a way to establish the gallery inside a fixed set of walls while legally selling books and beverages that could financially support the new space's programming and avoid any more tickets from the city.

"All of a sudden we had different kinds of insurance, different licenses, liquor licenses," Picard says. "It was the other extreme." She and King once again lived in the same building

as the space, this time in the apartment above the gallery.

At the new location—a storefront with gleaming wood floors, a pristine bar, and a well-manicured backyard—Sector 2337 expanded upon its original ethos, maintaining its interest in interdisciplinary conversations while updating its shabby-chic interior. It produced five years' worth of challenging exhibitions and associated publications that questioned the notion of the traditional exhibition space. Early on King, who was the Green Lantern Press's poetry editor and codirector of Sector 2337, curated a series of readings at the gallery for which he invited academics and poets to present pieces alongside some of the exhibitions. "Having a commitment to platforming a multidisciplinary culture and trying to foster a dialogue around those different avenues has always been a constant at Green Lantern," says Picard. "We have always wanted to present thoughtful, high-quality, difficult work in a way that people from all backgrounds and disciplinary interests would

still feel comfortable inhabiting."

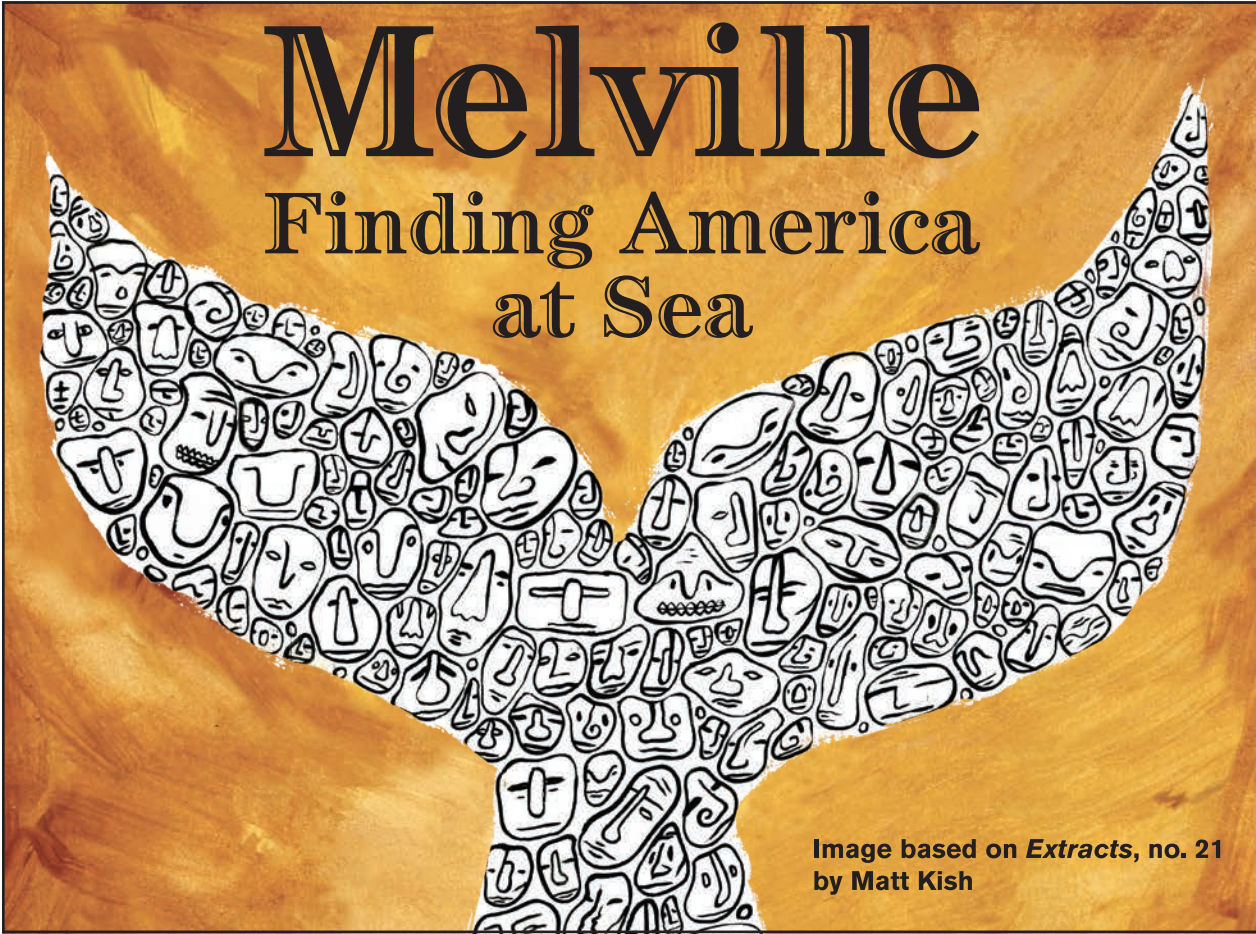
It may have no longer been marked by the remains of a billboard, but the brick wall at Sector 2337 does hold the embedded remains of a bird taxidermied by Rebecca Beachy for the gallery's 2017 exhibition "Coming of Age," which presented a collection of art objects that exhibit a relatively positive outlook on the future despite our present dark times. Sector 2337 also hosted symposia like the plant-centered 2015 "Imperceptibly and Slowly Opening" and exhibitions like "Styles of Radical Will: Italian Sculpture," a sculpture and painting show by legally blind artist Stephen Lapthisophon that placed frustrating physical restrictions on how the audience could look at the work.

Although physical walls will no longer surround the space, publishing and curating will continue in other spaces and cities, continuing the through lines that have carried each iteration of the Green Lantern. Increased difficulty in fund-raising made the final decision to close the space at the end of 2018 easier, but

the answer to where Picard and King might shift their attention to next remains open. It's unclear, Picard says, whether the closing of Sector 2337 simply marks a chapter break for the project or a decisive end.

In the final year of Sector 2337, Picard and assistant curator Sharmyn Cruz Rivera developed a gallery that occupied a former restaurant menu box that faced the street. Its placement made it completely open to passersby along Milwaukee Avenue, presenting few barriers for accessing the work in the outward-facing gallery. Cruz Rivera titled the project "Shoebox Gallery," and curated exhibitions that represented the openness and experimental qualities of Sector 2337 on a much smaller scale. "The thing that needs to be remembered is that it's possible, and that artists will continue to hack their environment," Picard says. "No matter what, there will always be the chance for weird aesthetic occasions." ■

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Image based on *Extracts*, no. 21
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LIT

Lit recs for the reader in search of adventure

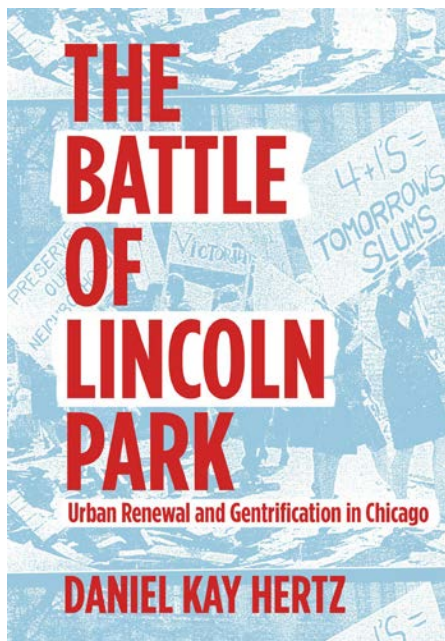
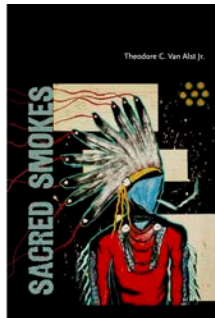
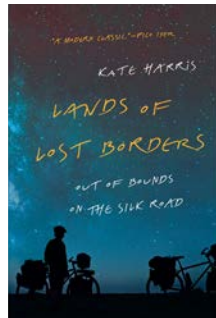
In Book Swap, a *Reader* staffer recommends two to five books and then asks a local wordsmith, literary enthusiast, or publishing-adjacent professional to do the same. In this week's edition, *Reader* culture editor **AIMEE LEVITT** trades recommendations with Northwestern professor, Algren scholar, and fellow Rogers Park resident **BILL SAVAGE**.

Bill Savage, professor, Algren scholar, Rogers Park resident

Daniel Kay Hertz's ***THE BATTLE OF LINCOLN PARK*** rocks: clean prose, tight focus, deep research, and it's as much about Now as Then. He tells a never-ending tale: gentrification and the intellectual incoherence of people who move into a neighborhood because it's diverse and interesting, and then labor mightily to make it less so.

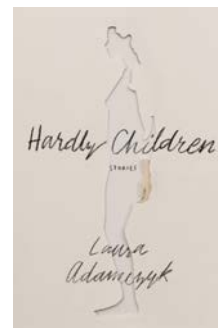
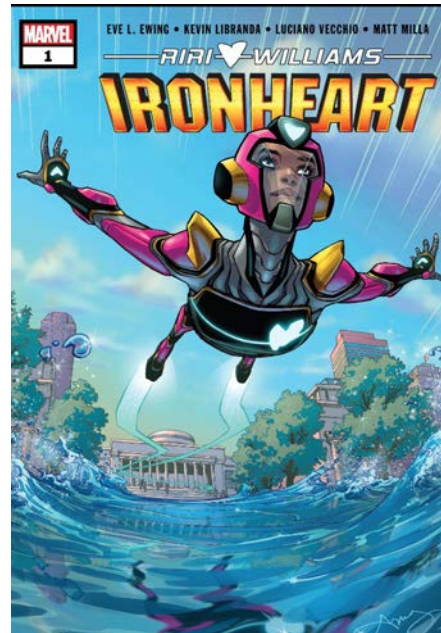
Property values matter less in Theodore C. Van Alst Jr.'s ***SACRED SMOKES***. This book literally hit me close to home, with stories set in my native Rogers Park. But the first-person point of view (a Native American gangbanger up to . . . if not no good, indifferent good at best) could not be further from my own experience. Meanwhile, Laura Adamczyk's ***HARDLY CHILDREN*** hooked me with the first line of its first story: "If asked, I will not say that I love children." Damn. That sentence could lead anywhere.

In comics, I'm a DCU guy, but Eve L. Ewing and Luciano Vecchio's new ongoing Marvel series ***IRONHEART*** should be on every Chicagoan's pull list. Two issues in, a crucial theme: people (villains and victims alike) get her superhero name wrong, calling her "Irongirl" or "Little Iron" or "Iron Chick," and Riri Williams (King College Prep alumna!) corrects them. What might seem to be a mere running gag evokes serious issues of misogyny and misogynoir: whether she just kicked your ass or saved your ass, it's basic respect to get her damn name right. Back in the DCU, read Brian Azzarello and Lee Bermejo's ***BATMAN DAMNED***, a limited series. Bermejo's nightmarish Gotham cityscapes are unparalleled, and Azzarello's stories always reveal the essential realities of mythic superheroes.



Aimee Levitt, Reader culture editor

Both *The Battle of Lincoln Park* and *Hardly Children* have been on my to-be-read pile for months. (My copy of *The Battle of Lincoln Park* is literally six inches from me as I type this.) But books I actually own get superseded by library books, which have built-in deadlines. So instead I read ***AMERICAN CASSANDRA: THE LIFE OF DOROTHY THOMPSON*** by Peter Kurth. Thompson was an American foreign correspondent and journalist during the first half of the 20th century and an all-around badass. She was especially prescient about the dangers of Nazism, so much so that Hitler expelled her from Germany in 1934. "Who Goes Nazi?," an essay she wrote in 1941, is just as applicable today; as Thompson wrote, "Nazism has nothing to do with race and nationality. It appeals to a certain type of mind." And that certain type of mind hasn't gone away, even if Hitler has.



I wanted to read ***LANDS OF LOST BORDERS: A JOURNEY ON THE SILK ROAD*** because its author, Kate Harris, was obsessed with Marco Polo as a kid and wanted to become an explorer and so did I! Except Harris actually got her childhood best friend to ride the Silk Road with her—well, from Istanbul to Leh, India, with a detour across Tibet—while I merely read about it, mostly on the el train to work. (Sometimes, though, I check the weather in Samarkand and imagine I'm there.) The lovely thing about this book was that it wasn't a chest-beating account of adventure. It was more of a meditation on the nature of exploring and inner wildness. I thought about that the other day when I took my dog out for a walk on the lakefront. The ice and snow had made strange and beautiful sculptures and markings on the ground. We were three blocks from home, but we were also explorers in another country. I think I have Kate Harris to thank for that. 



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The Image Book

MOVIES

Poetry in motion

Jean-Luc Godard's latest, *The Image Book*, takes shape as you watch it.

By **BEN SACHS**

Even when they trade in quotations, the films of Jean-Luc Godard exude a sense of spontaneity. The Swiss filmmaker has never been able to stay put on an idea or story line for very long; his work always goes off in unexpected directions or sprouts up non sequiturs. A possible explanation for the films' eccentric forms is that Godard has always embraced chance, coincidence, and arbitrary decisions as a core part of his creative practice. When he employs quotations (whether from written texts, movies, paintings, or musical compositions), he'll often do so because he simply likes how the sources look or sound. He also likes to name his films before determining anything else about them, letting the titles guide his ideas, motifs, arguments, and counterarguments as if they were watchwords or mantras.

A dense and cryptic essay film in the vein of his magnum opus, *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* (1988-'98), Godard's latest feature, *The Image Book*, also began as a title and abounds with quotations both carefully and randomly cho-

sen. It's a film that seems to be taking shape as you watch it—and in a sense, it is: Godard crams every moment with so much information that you can't possibly take it all in at once. You concentrate on certain details at the expense of others, constructing new audiovisual combinations each time you engage with it. (Your engagement will have a physical component if you see *The Image Book* in a theater. Godard designed the film's soundtrack for 7.1 surround sound, and he uses the format ingeniously—the sounds come at you from every part of the room.) I've seen it four times now, and it still feels fresh.

Ironically, not many sounds or images of *The Image Book* are original. The montage consists mainly of existing movie clips, news footage, paintings, and printed words. One of the most imaginative editors in cinema, Godard sequences the materials in an ever-dynamic fashion, typically following up a shot with something completely different texturally. And since Godard manipulates his images in all sorts of ways—stretching them

out, copying them off analog video equipment, digitally adjusting the colors—he has plenty of textures to choose from.

In short, *The Image Book* is about making old materials new again, either through physical manipulation or juxtaposing them with other things. It's also—like *Histoire(s)* before it—about approaching cultural history as something like a graveyard. Godard strips his citations of their context, which has the effect of turning his sounds and images into phantoms; resisting ready understanding, they provide only traces of meaning. (All we know for certain about many of Godard's quotations is that they belong to the past.) The pileup of decontextualized culture results in an exquisite gibberish that often suggests adult speech as perceived by small children. Not coincidentally Godard's collaborator, Fabrice Aragno, in a recent interview with *Bomb Magazine*, exhorted viewers to “watch the film like a child watches a cloud in the sky. . . . When a child sees this building meet that cloud, he can create something; that's what we're after. As adults, we're

seeing too many doors and locks to create much of anything.” It's also worth noting that one possible translation of the film's French title (*Le Livre D'Image*) is “the picture book.”

The narrative structure suggests something out of a book for children. It comprises six sections, the first five (which run about 45 minutes total) representing a person's five fingers and the last (which runs about 40) representing a hand. This form points to the film's overarching thematic question, which is one that a young child might pose: What's the difference between looking at the parts of a thing versus looking at the thing as a whole?

The “finger” sections of *The Image Book* consider different aspects of modern life—some abstract, some concrete. Part one, “Remakes,” touches on the possibility of humanity's self-annihilation, with shots of mushroom clouds, drownings, and jihadists committing atrocities in the Middle East. Part two, “Saint Petersburg Evenings,” hovers around two interrelated themes, the corruption of political idealism and the ravages of war. Named after a line by Rimbaud, part three (“Those flowers between the rails, in the confused wind of travelers”) centers around shots of trains and muses on technological progress. Part four, “The Spirit of the Laws,” is about exactly that; here, Godard alternates between idealistic portrayals of legality (exemplified by an extended quotation from John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln*) and grim scenes of violence carried out by figures of the state (exemplified by an extended quotation from Peter Watkins's *La Commune (Paris 1871)*). The film's fifth and shortest part, “La Région Centrale” (named mysteriously after Michael Snow's 1971 landscape film), posits that the most intimate bond that one person shares with another constitutes the center of his or her world.

Where these sections approach their subjects as collections of fragments, the sixth, “Joyful Arabia,” considers the Arab world as a whole, then expounds upon the hazards of this perspective. “While Islam holds the attention politically, the Arab world is primarily scenery and landscapes,” Godard narrates over the montage, which includes newly shot images of Tunisia, more documentary footage of jihadists, and Hollywood films both old and new about the Middle East. “Even if the Arab world is a world, it never exists as such.” Godard seems to be saying the region suffered from the single-minded view that imperialist Western

OSCAR-NOMINATED SHORT FILMS 2019: LIVE ACTION.

108 min.

OSCAR-NOMINATED SHORT FILMS 2019: ANIMATED.

75 min. Landmark Century Centre, 2828 N. Clark, 773-248-7759, landmarktheatres.com, \$12.50.

FILM

nations imposed upon it (and then exploited to “explain” the Arab world to the West), and that a motivating force behind various Middle Eastern revolutionary movements has been to avenge this suffering. The filmmaker voices sympathy for these movements near the end of *The Image Book*, despite the fact that he’s often rendered them terrifying. (At a few points during “Joyful Arabia,” Godard’s narration gets interrupted by the sound of a bomb exploding.)

This logic may seem contradictory, but then Godard has always thrived on contradictions—they’re integral to his cinematic poetry. And *The Image Book*, which teems with contradictions, is above all a poem. Concerned neither with telling stories nor even making rational sense, Godard aims straight for lyrical beauty, and he almost always hits his target. The narration alone, which is consistently eloquent and provocative, would succeed as an epic poem. To cite a few lines from part three: “When a century slowly dissolves into the next century, some people transform the means of survival into new means. It’s the latter we call art.” Or from part five: “Every political ambition uses the excuse to pretend to sacrifice itself for the people’s happiness, but the people have not asked you for anything; they just want to live in peace. And while in peace, the world is changing.” These aphoristic statements, like Godard’s open-ended movie titles, circle around big concepts without arriving at a definitive reading. Despite the seriousness of his concerns, the filmmaker still encourages a sense of play with regard to ideas.

Throughout the film Godard insists that we shouldn’t take him too seriously either. Shots from many of the director’s own movies factor into the rapid-fire assemblage, and Godard doesn’t make them seem different from anything else in the mix. It’s as if the filmmaker, who recently turned 88, is saying that he sees himself as already having entered the graveyard of history and that he’s fairly comfortable there. In this assertion, *The Image Book* is as much about the end of life as it is about the beginning, with the film taking a positive view of both stages. There’s something deeply satisfying about the parallelism of Godard’s themes; it suggests the promise of creative rebirth after historical tragedy. **A**

 @1bsachs



Bao

MOVIES

Minding the gaps

The Oscar-nominated animated and live-action shorts are full of disconnections.

By LEAH PICKETT

The 2019 batch of Oscar-nominated short films in the animated and live-action categories share a theme of disconnection. The animated shorts have a sunnier attitude about this painful state, demonstrating how divides can be bridged. The live-action films, meanwhile, forge ahead into darkness. They ask: What if the connection severs? What if it never clicks? What if two worlds remain unbridgeable?

Of the animated set, **Bao** (8 min.) edges closest to the precipice. Writer-director Domee Shi, the first woman to direct a short film for Pixar, startled audiences who went to see *Incredibles 2* in theaters and got the delicious, offbeat *Bao* as an appetizer.

The protagonist is a lonely Chinese-Canadian woman who makes a dumpling that comes to life. She raises the dumpling baby as her son; but as he quickly grows, he also grows apart from her, rejecting the mother-son mealtimes he used to enjoy when he was small for time spent with friends and soon a fiancée. Terrified by how fast their connection is fraying, the mother makes a decision that is at

once metaphorically brilliant and twisted on a raw emotional level. The ending redresses the situation and restores the bond. And yet the pain of their schism lingers.

In **LATE AFTERNOON** (10 min.), an elderly Irish woman straddles a rift between her memories and reality. The tension arises from whether the woman will close the gap or fall through, powered by writer-director Louise Bagnall’s expressionistic and mutable style. The woman’s past swirls through her present in colors that unfurl into shapes, a kaleidoscopic beauty that alternatively confuses and clarifies the life before her eyes. A plaintive violin score from Irish musician Colm Mac Con Iomaire runs through both worlds, making a reconnection, once it crystallizes, all the sweeter.

WEEKENDS (16 min.) also toggles between two worlds, telling the story of a boy in 1980s Toronto who routinely crosses the chasm of his parents’ divorce. Spending weekdays with his mother in the country and weekends with his father in the city, the boy learns how to connect with them in different ways based on their differences as people and how to reconcile his parents’ differences within himself. At first, the duality is stark. The mother’s house is melancholy and muted, while the father’s apartment thrums with urban noise and garish colors. The eventual blending of these environments from the boy’s perspective is a perfect match for the talents for filmmaker Trevor Jimenez. His cloudy and jittery animation style is as striking in establishing the binaries within the boy as it is poignant in dismantling them.

Though closer to a Pixar film in its glossy style and tone, **ONE SMALL STEP** (8 min.) from filmmakers Andrew Chesworth and Bobby Pontillas is another heart tugger about a parent-child relationship. The narrative

centers on a Chinese-American girl and her single father, a shoemaker, who supports his daughter’s dream of becoming an astronaut. But as she grows up, she struggles in school and drifts apart from her dad, to the point that their connection, along with her vision for herself, shatters. Similar to *Bao*, but more like the sci-fi weepies *Contact* and *Interstellar*, this film has a bittersweet ending and a wholehearted message: that the bond between a loving parent and child is otherworldly in its might.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR (14 min.), the only outright comedy of the bunch, posits that what separates us from each other is also what disconnects us from ourselves: addictions, compulsions, anxieties, and so on. Thus, five animals meet in group therapy to discuss their hang-ups. A cat can’t stop licking himself. A pig can’t stop eating. A praying mantis eats her lovers. A leech has separation anxiety. A Bigfoot-like creature has anger issues. A bird under hypnosis recalls how he pushed his baby brother out of their nest in a jealous rage when they were hatchlings, with the defense: “He was eating my worms!”

Codirectors Alison Snowden and David Fine, while uninventive in their animation style, are canny about the disconnect that occurs when primal urges overtake rational thought. Much of the film’s humor stems from the animals’ hypocrisy; they can see problems in others, but are either oblivious to or unwilling to acknowledge similar defects in themselves.

The live-action short **DETAINMENT** (30 min.) also contains blame shifting, though the circumstances couldn’t be grimmer. In 1993, two ten-year-old boys kidnapped, tortured, and murdered a toddler in Liverpool, England. This film focuses on the boys when they were first detained by the police and interviewed in separate locations with their parents by their sides. The conversations, based on public records and the interview transcripts, are extremely disturbing. The reason is fourfold: the boys either don’t understand or don’t care about the depths of their brutality (probably both), they are breathtaking liars, the parents are shaken by what they’ve wrought, and the actors who play the boys are outstanding.

But if writer-director Vincent Lambe’s goal was to unnerve his audience, this was a cheap shot, and he should have made a different movie. What Lambe considers but leaves unplumbed is how children are more easily forgiven for smudging the line between right and wrong, and how adults too easily let them. This disconnection is ripe for a ➔

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wider-reaching documentary or fictionalized narrative film. But as a shallow reenactment, this movie adds nothing to the tragedy.

A better film about two boys with a shaky sense of reality and consequences is **FAUVE** (17 min.), which in French means “wild beast.” Montreal-based filmmaker Jeremy Comte crafts a remarkable portrait of inseparable friends, preteens who get off on tricking each other. For example, the smaller one pretends to break his leg and the taller one, skinny and shirtless, calls his bluff. It goes on like this for a while, the boys roving from an abandoned train to a sun-soaked field to harsher environs I won’t spoil here. Suffice it to say that Comte knows how to snap a connection and leave it pulsing like a phantom limb.

So too does the Spanish filmmaker Rodrigo Sorogoyen, as evidenced by his short film **MADRE** (19 min.). A woman stops by her apartment with her mother and answers a phone call from her ex, Ramon. Their six-year-old son is on the line, saying Ramon has left him on an empty beach somewhere in France or Spain, he’s not sure which. The woman hands the phone to her mother and calls a mutual friend and then the police.

The film contains no cuts and no close-ups. The camera stays wide, only pushing closer when the woman’s desperation peaks. It follows her around the apartment as she paces, pleading to her most beloved to keep talking, to stay on the line—even as his battery dies, his reception drops to one bar, and a strange man approaches. Though mostly confined to one bright space, *Madre* welcomes darkness, punctuated in the end by a dropped call’s sickening beep.

MARGUERITE (19 min.), written and directed by Marianne Farley, is about a woman at the end of her life contemplating a connection she never made. The woman is dying of kidney disease, and her only earthly bond, it seems,

is with her caretaker. When she learns that her caretaker is a lesbian, she turns to an old photo album filled with memories of her best friend: the one who got away because she never admitted her true feelings. Later, she asks her caretaker, “What’s it like to make love to a woman?”

The film could have dipped into darker territory from here, but Farley demurs. Instead, the sadness deepens, grows tender like so many bruises. It’s rare to get a second chance in life. If you’re lucky, you get a shadow of it.

The best of the live-action films, **SKIN** (20 min.), ups the ante to examine one of the most unfortunate outcomes of disconnection: violent fear of the other. A sweet-natured boy looks up to his father (Jonathan Tucker), mother (Danielle Macdonald), and their friends, all of whom are skinheads. He joins his parents at the supermarket and sees a black man in another checkout line; they smile at each other. The father sees this interaction. He calls his friends and they beat the man nearly to death in the parking lot. The man’s wife and son watch, scream, and cry from inside their car.

In this movie, as in life, a disconnection is often a connection too. When the black boy watches the white boy drive away with the attackers, he sees both a connection in their shared age and the most profound disconnection making sense fully, perhaps for the first time. Other examples abound, but the most striking is the way the black man’s friends execute a reprisal that this critic in no way saw coming.

Written and directed by Guy Nattiv, and based on an original idea by Jaime Ray Newman, *Skin* has a tight structure and a perfect ending. If it were published as a short story, it would win many a literary prize. As a short film, it certainly deserves an Oscar. **A**

@leahpickett



Marguerite



The 5 Browns: Digging Through Darkness

NOW PLAYING

The 5 Browns: Digging Through Darkness

Ben Niles (*Note by Note: The Making of Steinway L7037*) directed this unsettling and powerful documentary about the Brown siblings, five piano prodigies (three female, two male) who became famous in the classical music world when they were still in their teens. About a decade after their rise to prominence in the early 2000s, the sisters announced that their father had sexually abused them for a number of years; this revelation led to the father’s arrest and the end of the siblings’ relationship with their mother, who had long turned a blind eye to her husband’s wrongdoings. Niles handles the subject of sexual abuse forthrightly but not pruriently, balancing his consideration of trauma with a no less fascinating study of the Browns’ careers as classical pianists. The two subjects come together in the movie’s affecting concluding passages, which show the grown siblings recording an album of pieces they’d first played as children, working through their difficult memories. **—BEN SACHS 100 min. At Facets Cinéma. Visit facets.org for showtimes.**

The Adventures of Prince Achmed

German silhouette animator Lotte Reiniger is best known for this enchanting 1926 film—the earliest surviving feature-length animation—that she adapted from one of the stories in 1001 Arabian Nights. **—J.R. JONES 2010 67 min. 35mm. Dennis Scott provides live accompaniment. Introduced by members of Manual Cinema. Sat 2/9, 11:30 AM. Music Box Theatre**

Arctic

Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen has moved agilely between romantic leading-man roles (*A Royal Affair*) and blackhearted villainy (*Casino Royale*, TV’s *Hannibal*), with the occasional foray into comedy (*Men & Chicken*). As a downed pilot lost in a barren, treacherous region of Iceland, he carries this bone-chilling nature survival thriller with minimal spoken dialogue, his rugged physicality, and a wide spectrum of emotions. Early we see him shelter in the wreck of his plane, lay up provisions by ice fishing, and signal any-

one who might be flying by; when a rescue chopper crashes, he breaks camp in an attempt to deliver the unconscious passenger (Maria Thelma Smáradóttir) to a lonely outpost mountains and miles away. First-time feature director Joe Penna and his cowriter and editor Ryan Morrison skillfully exploit genre conventions, but suspense arises mostly from what fresh hells they devise for the hero to conquer, for conquer he must.

—ANDREA GRONVALL PG-13, 97 min. Landmark Century Centre. Visit landmarktheatre.org for showtimes.

Berlin Babylon

This 2001 German documentary by Hubertus Siegert considers the architectural development of central Berlin after the wall came down, but with no narration giving order to the commentary from a multitude of planners, architects, and city officials, it soon settles into a languid city symphony. The montage sequences are highly seductive: the industrial band Einstürzende Neubauten (“new buildings falling down”) bangs away as construction workers pour cement, and Brahms, Beethoven, and Wagner accompany the endlessly drifting aerial shots. Siegert tracks the progress of several large-scale projects—the \$240 million Federal Chancellery building, the new Sony Center on Potsdamer Platz—and, after showing 1945 footage of a decimated Berlin, visits the Academy of Arts, once home to Nazi architect Albert Speer. Unfortunately the film never establishes either a perspective of its own or a coherent geography of the city, so the politicians pontificating at ceremonies and architects commiserating at building sites become deadly dull long before the film exhausts its 88 minutes. In German with subtitles. **—J.R. JONES 2002 88 min. Fri 2/8, 7 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art FREE**

Boy Erased

Joel Edgerton writes, directs, and costars in this heart-tugging drama about an 18-year-old pastor’s son (Lucas Hedges) who undergoes “gay conversion therapy.” After the protagonist’s father (Russell Crowe) and mother (Nicole Kidman) learn about his sexual orientation, they impel their only child to enter a Christian treatment center in rural Arkansas, run by “recovered” gays who promise parents that they can cure their children of same-sex attraction via God’s grace. In reality, the unlicensed staff’s tactics include emotional and physical abuse disguised as tough love,

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which Edgerton renders in horrific detail. Based on the 2016 memoir by Garrard Conley, the narrative hits some predictable beats while upending expectations in other ways, like shining an empathetic light on the young man's parents without excusing their behavior. Kidman delivers a delicate and nuanced performance as usual, while Edgerton's take on the manipulative head therapist is disturbingly accurate. —**LEAH PICKETT 2018** *R*, 114 min. Sat 2/9, 7 and 9:30 PM; and Sun 2/10, 4 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films

RR Casablanca

Part of what makes this wartime Hollywood drama (1942) about love and political commitment so fondly remembered is its evocation of a time when the sentiment of this country about certain things appeared to be unified. (It's been suggested that communism is the political involvement that Bogart's grizzled casino owner Rick may be in retreat from at the beginning.) This hastily patched together picture, which started out as a B film, wound up getting an Oscar, and displays a cozy, studio-bound claustrophobia that Howard Hawks improved upon in his superior spin-off *To Have and Have Not*. Then again, we get Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, Paul Henreid, Conrad Veidt, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre, Marcel Dalio, and S.Z. Sakall, and Dooley Wilson performing "As Time Goes By." —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 2003** *PG*, 102 min. 35mm. Sun 2/10, 2 PM. Music Box Theatre

RR Day of Wrath

Carl Dreyer made this extraordinary 1943 drama, about the church's persecution of women for witchcraft in the 17th century, during the German occupation of Denmark. He later claimed that he hadn't sought to pursue any contemporary parallels while adapting the play *Anne Petersdotter* (which concerns adultery as well as witchcraft), but that seems disingenuous—*Day of Wrath* may be the greatest film ever made about living under totalitarian rule. Astonishing in its artistically informed period re-creation as well as its hypnotic mise-en-scene (with some exceptionally eerie camera movements), it challenges the viewer by suggesting at times that witchcraft isn't so much an illusion as an activity produced by intolerance. And like Dreyer's other major films, it's sensual to the point of carnality. I can't think of another 40s film that's less dated. In Danish with subtitles. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 2003** *110 min. 35mm. Sun 2/10, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Fireworks

In this complex flashback narrative that fuses danger, sorrow, and loveliness, detective Nishi (writer-director Takeshi Kitano) is a quiet yet volatile man who takes a road trip with his dying wife, while his partner Horibe (Ren Osugi) trains himself as an artist after being paralyzed on the job. Intercutting between the lonely, productive Horibe and Nishi, whose time with his wife is periodically interrupted by violent face-offs with organized criminals, this 1997 movie is as full of shocking, staccato brutality as meditative calm. Several static compositions presented in satisfying long takes function as serene still lifes, and tight close-ups of sumptuous paintings and drawings (by Kitano), with their saturated colors and surreal yet iconic imagery, are as forceful as the depictions of the gruesome maimings and killings that enable Nishi to keep the future at bay. In Japanese with subtitles. —**LISA ALSPECTOR 1985** *103 min. 35mm. Showing with Kenneth Anger's 1947 experimental short Fireworks (15 min., 16mm). Wed 2/13, 7:30 PM. Northeastern Illinois University*

High Flying Bird

Directed, shot, and edited by Steven Soderbergh, this cerebral Netflix original is an even more incisive drama about the business of sports than *Moneyball*. André Holland (*Moonlight*, *Selma*) stars as a shrewd New York agent fiercely committed to his mostly young and black basketball clients, but who's stymied by a league lockout after negotiations with the ballers' labor reps stall. Weaving between the teams' billionaire owners, the players' association, and the executives of his own agency, he hustles to get the athletes working—and solvent—again. Screenwriter Tarell Alvin McCraney's extensive dialogue bristles with ideas and insights, and he clearly acknowledges the seminal book *The Revolt of the Black Athlete* by sociologist and civil rights activist Harry Edwards, who has a cameo. With Zazie Beetz, Melvin Gregg, Bill Duke, Sonja Sohn, and Kyle MacLachlan; NBA pros Reggie Jackson, Karl-Anthony Towns, and Donovan Mitchell appear in interview segments. —**ANDREA GRONVALL 2009** *90 min. Streaming on Netflix*

RR I Heart Huckabees

David O. Russell's 1999 *Three Kings* still seems slightly miraculous, a Hollywood action movie that mercilessly satirizes American greed and mendacity during the gulf war. Bringing it to the screen so taxed Russell he swore he'd never attempt anything like it again, and true to his word, *I Heart Huckabees* (2004) is smaller and more cerebral, a philosophical comedy about man's place in a universe colonized by Targets and Walmarts. A nerdy organizer (Jason Schwartzman of *Rushmore*) finds his wetlands-preservation project being co-opted by a glad-handing executive (Jude Law) of the Huckabees retail chain and hires two "existential detectives" (Dustin Hoffman and Lily Tomlin) to find meaning in his life. Among the other oddballs in this cosmic farce are a moody French philosopher (Isabelle Huppert), a firefighter (Mark Wahlberg) angrily obsessed with oil dictatorships, and a blond model (Naomi Watts) driven to distraction by her hollow life as "the face of Huckabees." —**J.R. JONES 2004** *R*, 107 min. 35mm. Wed 2/13, 7 and 9:30 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films



High Flying Bird

RR Inquiring Nuns

In this fascinating 1968 documentary, one of the earliest by Kartemquin Films, two outgoing Catholic nuns, Sister Marie Arne and Sister Mary Campion, walk around Chicago asking people if they're happy. The answers they get are reasoned, spiritual, sometimes philosophical, and, in one case, frankly sexual, but a recurring motif is hope that the Vietnam war will end soon. The sisters' warmth and interest are reciprocated by their subjects, most of whom show concern for others and little regard for their moment in the spotlight. Gordon Quinn and Gerald Tamener directed. —**ANDREA GRONVALL 2009** *66 min. Showing with Quinn's '63 Boycott (see separate listing). Quinn attends the screening. Fri 2/8, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Nun

Jacques Rivette's controversial though chaste second feature (1966), originally banned for a year both in France and for export, was trimmed and slightly reedited by its U.S. distributor (years later it was restored to its original form and 140-minute running time). As a direct and indirect commentary on institutional repression and the depravity that arises from compulsory religious training, it's a feminist movie with particular relevance for our era. Adapted from Denis Diderot's famous 18th-century novel about Suzanne Simonin (the remarkable Anna Karina)—an illegitimate teenager forced to enter a convent by her family—this is the most accessible by far of all of Rivette's features. It has a straightforward narrative that mainly concentrates on Suzanne's experiences at two convents—one severe and punitive, the other "progressive" and more worldly (though no less stifling for Suzanne when she finds herself pursued by the lesbian mother superior)—before she escapes to encounter a different kind of oppression in the world outside. Far from a nonbeliever, Suzanne is a devout character without a religious calling, and the film as a whole is a complex celebration of her continuous drive toward freedom. Rivette's highly original and formal "cellular" construction uses a striking contemporary score (by Jean-Claude Éloy) and selective sound effects (by Michel Fano) to balance the feeling of confinement

with a nearly constant sense of the world outside; the intense mise-en-scene and use of camera movements often recall Carl Dreyer (though Rivette's conscious model was Kenji Mizoguchi); and the metallic colors and resourceful use of settings conspire to create a world that's both material and abstract. A great film that remains one of the cornerstones of the French New Wave, scripted by Rivette and Jean Gruault; with Micheline Presle, Liselotte Pulver, and Francisco Rabal. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 1985** *140 min. Fri 2/8, 3:45 PM; Sat 2/9, 3 and 7:30 PM; Sun 2/10, 5:15 PM; Mon 2/11, 7:30 PM; Wed 2/13, 6 PM; and Thu 2/14, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

Overlord

Overlord takes many elements you've seen before and creates a mashup that's able to deliver some gory fun, riveting suspense, zombie horrors, and terrifying depictions of modern war in equal measure. In WWII, a group of soldiers is sent behind enemy lines to destroy a German radio tower in a church so the Allies can provide air support on D-Day. Things of course get complicated as their plane is shot down and most of the soldiers are captured or killed. The survivors are committed to finishing the mission, only to find there's more truth than fiction in the stories about the church they've targeted. Jovan Adepo is riveting as Boyce, whose blackness makes him vulnerable to Nazi aggression. Haters of gore won't find much to like, but there are plenty of sheer thrills and a bloodily satisfying climax. Julius Avery directed. —**ANDREA THOMPSON 2018** *R*, 110 min. Fri 2/8-Sat 2/9, midnight. Music Box

RR The Princess Bride

Rob Reiner's friendly 1987 fairy-tale adventure delicately mines the irony inherent in its make-believe without ever undermining the effectiveness of the fantasy. The framing device is a grandfather (Peter Falk) reading a favorite book aloud to his skeptical grandson (Fred Savage). In the imaginary kingdom of Florin, the beautiful Buttercup (Robin Wright) is separated from the farmhand she loves (Cary Elwes), betrothed to the evil Prince Humperdinck (Chris Sarandon), and spirited away by the nefarious Vizzini (Wallace Shawn). The colorful characters and adventures are, at their best, like live-action equivalents of Disney animated features, with lots of other fond Hollywood memories thrown in: Andre the Giant seems a cross between Andy Devine and Lumpjaw the Bear, while Mandy Patinkin's engaging Inigo Montoya conjures up Gene Kelly in *The Pirate*. Adapted by William Goldman from his own novel. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 2010** *PG*, 98 min. Wed 2/13-Thu 2/14, 7 PM. Music Box

Rendezvous in Chicago

After writer-director Michael Glover Smith's delectably layered *Mercury in Retrograde* (2017), this follow-up, a slender anthology film, disappoints. Its three chapters are connected only in that they depict romantic relationships in the same city. The first is by far the strongest, chronicling a would-be pickup artist's (Kevin Wehby) attempts to dazzle a University of Chicago grad student (Clare Cooney) with his professed deep-bench reading, a pose she quickly dispels when she challenges him to a game of strip literary trivia. The actors are well matched, and there's a satisfying twist at the segment's end. Alas, the second chapter, about a gay couple in Rogers Park (Rashaad Hall, Matthew Sherbach) trying to assess their long-term compatibility based on who's a cat person or a dog person, could have been funnier if it had more closely hewed to that comic premise; ➔

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FILM

➡ instead, it gradually sinks under waves of Chicago boosterism, extolling the neighborhoods and the lake, leaving behind something sweet but insubstantial. The last chapter is the most formally daring: a hospital worker (Nina Ganet) comes home early, finds her boyfriend (Shane Simmons) in bed with another woman, tosses him out in a rage, and then breaks the fourth wall to apologize to the viewer for her behavior. Apology morphs into flirtation, giving Ganet an opportunity to show her versatility as an actor and closing the film on a teasingly surrealistic note. Smith ardently admires the French New Wave; his preface before the first chapter features a cameo by Haydée Politoff, the star of Éric Rohmer's *La Collectionneuse* (1967). Smith may not be Rohmer, but Politoff remains incandescent. —**ANDREA GRONVALL** 69 min. *Smith and select cast and crew attend the screenings. Fri 2/8, 8 PM; Sat 2/9, 4:30 PM; Mon 2/11, 7:45 PM; and Wed 2/13, 7:45 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

RR Rona, Azim's Mother

In this finely calibrated drama a closely knit family of Afghan emigres lives simply but peaceably in Tehran until one unexpected crisis triggers another. Azim (Mohsen Tanabandeh, in a majestic performance) is the oldest son, a night-shift utility worker who provides for his wife and sister and has raised the money to smuggle his mother (Fateme Hosseini) and his brother's family to a new life in Germany. But at the last minute the brother refuses to take the elderly matriarch along, and Azim, who has no insurance, is left to find a way to save the distraught woman when her health spirals downward. Everything in this sensitively observed film—from the play of velvety chiaroscuro lighting to the impersonal demeanor of hospital staffers and the poignant dignity of first-time actor Hosseini—builds a sense of quiet desperation and ineluctable fate, culminating in an effect that is almost novelistic in terms of sweep, tone, and psychological depth. Following *A Few Cubic Meters of Love* (2014) and *Parting* (2016), this marks writer-director Jamshid Mahmoudi's third collaboration with his producer brother Navid Mahmoudi as they map the varieties of the contemporary Afghan-Iranian experience. In Farsi and Dari with subtitles. —**ANDREA GRONVALL** 89 min. *Sat 2/9, 6:30 PM, and Sun 2/10, 3 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

The Stepford Wives

Overlong and underdeveloped, this flimsy Bryan Forbes horror story (1975) would probably have made a decent television movie; but on the big screen and stretched to nearly two hours, it sags badly. Katharine Ross stars as a young suburban wife whose investigations into the strange transformation of her female neighbors into mindless robots leads to a grisly secret. The cast—with the happy exception of the always delightful Paula Prentiss—is uniformly dreary; and by the time the mystery begins to take shape, it's hardly possible to care. —**DON DRUKER** 1985 PG, 115 min. 35mm. *Thu 2/14, 7 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art FREE*

Stranger Inside

Director Cheryl Dunye reportedly spent four years researching this drama about women in prison, and its authenticity—especially its strong sense of group dynamics—immediately distinguishes it from sexploitation flicks like *Chained Heat*. Treasure (Yolonda Ross) is glad to transfer from juvenile detention to the state penitentiary on her 21st birthday, thinking that the birth mother she never knew is doing life there, but when she tries to kindle a mother-daughter relationship with a ruthless clique leader (Davenia McFadden) she



Rona, *Azim's Mother*

provokes the jealousy of the woman's other "daughter" (Rain Phoenix). Dunye bluntly portrays the prisoners' brutal aggression, the intense racial antagonism, and the trading of sex for protection, but she's just as interested in the tender camaraderie and in Treasure's moral awakening. Except for an unconvincing coda, the script is excellent, and Nancy Schreiber's fluid camera work and harsh lighting transform the prison into a womb both menacing and comforting. Ross and McFadden turn in riveting performances. —**TED SHEN** 2001 97 min. *Preceded by a 7 PM social hour. Sat 2/9, 8 PM. Chicago Filmmakers*

RR The Stranger

Orson Welles's 1946 film reproduces his personal themes of self-scrutiny and self-destruction only in outline, though it is an inventive, highly enjoyable thriller. FBI investigator Edward G. Robinson tracks a Nazi war criminal (Welles) to his lair, a small town in Connecticut where he lives with his unknowing American wife (Loretta Young) and teaches at a prep school. Welles rolls out all his technical thunder for the chase finale, but the most impressive scenes in the film may be those that depict daily life in the village; wrapped in snow, the setting has the magic hush of *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Welles has said that he made the film to prove he could shoot a conventional Hollywood feature; the proof is there but it did him no good. With Billy House; John Huston contributed, anonymously, to the script. —**DAVE KEHR** 1985 95 min. 35mm. *Former Reader film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum lectures at the Tuesday screening. Fri 2/8, 2 and 6 PM; Tue 2/12, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

Tito and the Birds

This animated feature from Brazil is so imaginative in its narrative and visual design that I wish I liked it more. The title character is a ten-year-old boy whose scientist father was working on a contraption that transforms birdsong into energy before he disappeared; when the world is struck by the outbreak of a disease that turns people into rocks, Tito realizes he can use his father's invention to save humanity. The film delivers a timely antifascist message: the spread of the disease has something to do with a powerful right-wing media tycoon who's gotten rich off of exploiting his viewers' fears of one another. It also looks like few other animated movies I've seen, employing Van Gogh-style oils for the

backgrounds and computer-generated characters and details. Still, there's a difference between original and good—the visuals are dim and not especially attractive. Moreover, the story works as political allegory but doesn't make much sense on its own terms. Gabriel Bitar, André Catoto, and Gustavo Steinberg directed. In Portuguese with subtitles. —**BEN SACHS** 73 min. *Fri 2/8, 2 and 6:30 PM; Sat 2/9, 3 PM; Sun 2/10, 2 PM; Mon 2/11, 6 PM; Tue 2/12, 7:45 PM; Wed 2/13, 6 PM; and Thu 2/14, 8:30 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

The Watermelon Woman

Cheryl Dunye's 1996 first feature is a lighthearted and for the most part lightweight pseudodocumentary about an aspiring lesbian filmmaker (Dunye) attempting to research the life of an early Hollywood black actress known as the Watermelon Woman. The film's laid-back charm and the delicacy of the sex scenes make the controversy the film raised in the U.S. Senate upon its release all the more grotesque. With Guinevere Turner (*Go Fish*), Valarie Walker, and a funny bit by Camille Paglia about the positive aspects of watermelon imagery in relation to both blacks and Italians. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** 1985 90 min. *Tue 2/12, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Way We Were

A film about marriage that works reasonably well as a star vehicle for Robert Redford and Barbra Streisand, but fails resoundingly as the caustic social comment director Sydney Pollack and writer Arthur Laurents obviously intended (1973). Streisand acts up a storm in a part that calls for rigidity and a lack of humor; Redford appears to be doing less, but steals scene after scene from her through pure skill and assurance. A for effort; C for execution. With Bradford Dillman, Murray Hamilton, Patrick O'Neal, and Viveca Lindfors. —**DON DRUKER** 1985 PG, 118 min. *Sun 2/10, 11:30 AM. Music Box*

West Side Story

Decent 1961 adaptation of the Bernstein-Robbins musical, if you can handle Richard Beymer and Natalie Wood in the leads. Robert Wise directed, with no songs in his heart. With Russ Tamblyn, Rita Moreno, and George Chakiris. —**DAVE KEHR** 1985 151 min. *Thu 2/14, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

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FILM

ALSO PLAYING

Among Wolves

Shawn Convey's 2016 documentary is about a motorcycle gang in Bosnia and Herzegovina that works to aid their small mountain town after the Bosnian war and to defend a herd of wild horses. In Croatian with subtitles. **94 min.** Convey attends all screenings. *At Music Box Theatre. Visit musicboxtheatre.com for showtimes.*

Boom!

Elizabeth Taylor is a terminally ill woman living on a remote island, and Richard Burton is her visitor, who may or may not be the Angel of Death. Joseph Losey (*The Prowler*) directed this 1968 drama, whose script Tennessee Williams adapted from his play *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore*. **PG, 113 min.** **35mm.** *Thu 2/14, 10 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Films by Paul Clipson

A program of five films by San Francisco experimental filmmaker Paul Clipson, who died in 2018, plus selected additional films by friends and others who worked in the same lyrical mode as Clipson, including Nathaniel Dorsky, Konrad Steiner, Zach Iannazi, John Davis, and Dicky Bahto. (1990-2017) **98 min.** **16mm.** *Bahto attends the screening. Fri 2/8, 7 PM. Logan Center for the Arts FREE*

Cold Pursuit

Hans Petter Moland directed this revenge drama about a snowplow driver (Liam Neeson) who takes on the drug cartel that murdered his son. With Laura Dern, Emmy Rossum, William Forsythe, and Tom Bateman. **R, 118 min.** *Chatham 14, City North 14*

Farmer/Veteran

A 2016 documentary about an Iraqi war combat vet who's struggling to make a go at farming while dealing with PTSD. Alix Blair, Jeremy Lange, and D.L. Anderson directed. **65 min.** *Co-director Anderson attends the screening. Sun 2/10, 9:30 PM. Music Box*

Home Video Day

The MCA Chicago, Media Burn Archive, Video Data Bank, and area video archivists host an evening of home video tapes. Attendees can bring tapes to show, or just view. *Fri 2/8, 6 PM. Museum of Contemporary Art FREE*

Kiss the Blood Off My Hands

A returned POW (Burt Lancaster) who's killed a man in a bar fight is taken in by a nurse (Joan Fontaine) in this 1948 suspense film. Norman Foster directed. **2014 79 min.** **35mm.** *Fri 2/8, 9:30 PM, and Sun 2/10, 1:30 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part

In this sequel to the 2014 animated film, the Lego universe is threatened by Duplo invaders and an impending "Ar-mom-ageddon." Mike Mitchell directed. With voices by Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks, Will Arnett, Charlie Day, Alison Brie, Nick Offerman, and Will Ferrell. **PG, 106 min.** *ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, City North 14, Showplace ICON, Webster Place 11*

The Milk of Sorrow

Claudia Llosa directed this Peruvian drama (2009) about

a young girl suffering from a rare disease who takes command of her fate. In Spanish with subtitles. **95 min.** **35mm.** *Mon 2/11, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Mirai

Mamoru Hosoda directed this animated Japanese fantasy film about a boy who travels through time with his younger sister as a future, teenage version of herself. In Japanese with subtitles. **PG, 100 min.** *Sat 2/9, 9:30 PM, and Mon 2/11, 7 PM. Music Box*

The Peacemaker

A portrait of peacemaker Pdraig O'Malley, filmed over the course of five years as he visits various countries around the world to try to help negotiate peaceful ends to conflicts. James Demo directed. **90 min.** *Demo attends the screening. Mon 2/11, 9:30 PM. Music Box*

Pig

Mani Haghighi directed this Iranian dark comedy about a blacklisted low-budget slasher film director who wants to know why a serial killer is murdering other banned filmmakers but seemingly ignoring him. In Persian with subtitles. **108 min.** *Sat 2/9, 8:15 PM, and Sun 2/10, 4:45 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

The Prodigy

In this horror-thriller, a mother believes that a supernatural entity is taking control of her son. Nicholas McCarthy directed. **R. ArcLight, City North 14**

'63 Boycott

Kartemquin Films founder Gordon Quinn directed this 30-minute documentary about the 1963 boycott through which some 250,000 students protested the segregation of the Chicago Public Schools. **2017 30 min.** *Showing with Quinn and Gerald Temaner's Inquiring Nuns (see separate listing). Quinn attends the screening. Fri 2/8, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Trip

David Fenster directed this road-trip documentary film about author-poet Eileen Myles. *Fenster and Myles attend the screening. Tue 2/12, 7 PM. Poetry Foundation FREE*

United Red Army (The Young Man Was, Part I)

Naeem Mohaiemen directed this 2011 experimental documentary/essay film about Japanese Red Army's hijacking of a plane in 1977. **70 min.** *Mohaiemen attends the screening. Thu 2/14, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

What Men Want

A female sports agent (Taraji P. Henson) suddenly has an advantage in the male-dominated field when she gains the ability to hear men's thoughts. Adam Shankman directed. With Aldis Hodge and Tracy Morgan. **R, 117 min.** *ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, City North 14, Showplace ICON, 600 N. Michigan*

Who Killed Cock Robin?

Cheng Wei-Hao directed this Taiwanese thriller about a journalist investigating a fatal hit-and-run accident that he witnessed years earlier after new clues surface. In Mandarin with subtitles. **118 min.** *At Facets Cinémathèque. Visit facets.org for showtimes.* 

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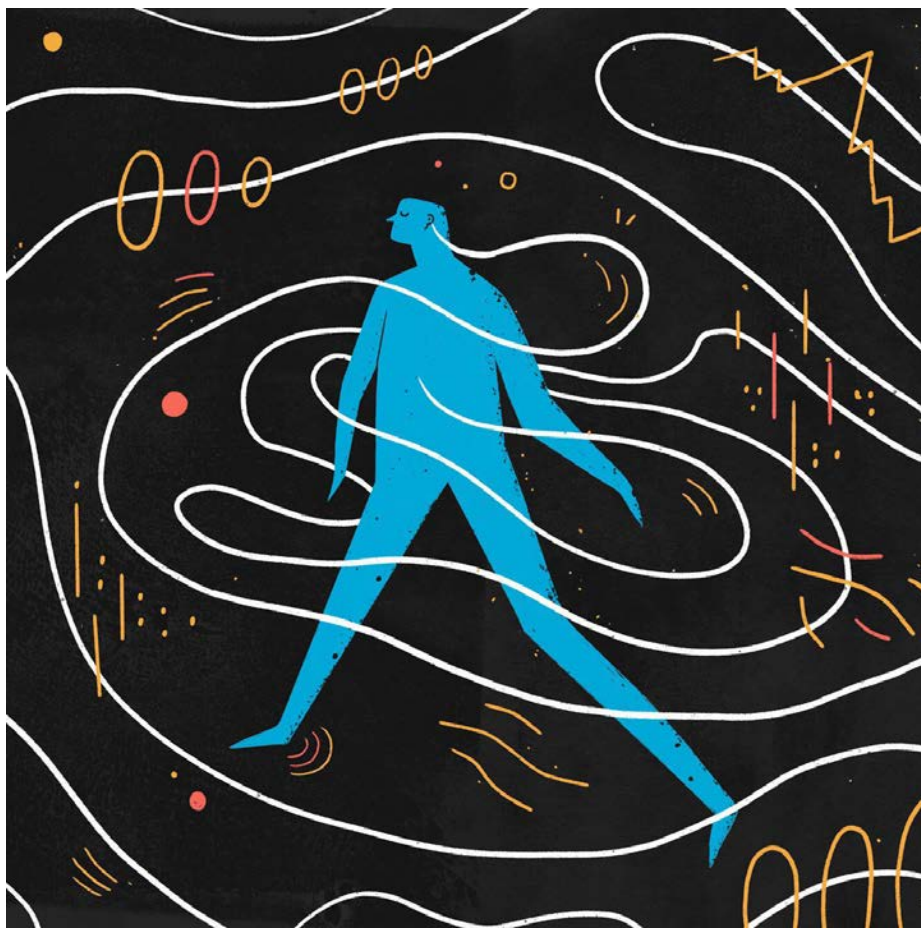
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KATIE LUKES

Learning to love Chicago with your ears

The Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology believes engagement with the sonic environment can help build more sustainable communities—and it's demonstrating with a soundwalk in the Chicago Pedway.

By KERRY CARDOZA

“When people stop listening, noise pollution occurs,” says Eric Leonardson, summing up the field of acoustic ecology in just a few words. He’s paraphrasing an idea from Canadian composer and environmentalist R. Murray Schafer, a seminal thinker in acoustic ecology—broadly speaking, the study of the relationships that connect human beings, sound, and the environment. An audio artist, compos-

er, and performer, Leonardson also teaches in the Sound Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and founded the Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology.

Now in its 11th year, the MSAE is a Chicago-based nonprofit that aims to promote public dialogue around the preservation and restoration of natural and cultural sound environments. It does this primarily by hosting public events, such as workshops on how to make field recordings and “soundwalks,” which the organization has described as “focused listen-

ing in which one moves through a soundscape with complete attention to sound.” These are a particularly important part of the MSAE’s work—the group might invite people to listen to the recovering ecology of Big Marsh Park near Lake Calumet, for instance, or tune into the noises of gentrification in Pilsen.

A recording of an evening MSAE soundwalk from July 2014 in Millennium Park seems to capture almost every sound of the city. The water feature in Lurie Garden trickles constantly as people pass by in conversation, sometimes quietly, sometimes bursting in with a loud cackle, sometimes calling out to a child. “Oh, these are wildflowers!” one woman exclaims. Distant traffic sounds creep in occasionally, low enough to be mistaken for white noise. Gradually classical music becomes audible, the sound of stringed instruments rising and then fading away. A loudspeaker announces the commencement of a concert in Pritzker Pavilion. Then the music starts to build, blending with birdcalls, buzzing bugs, children playing, and passing talk. It’s easy to imagine tuning all this information out—taken together, the sounds are nondescript, ordinary to any city dweller. But pausing to listen allows soundwalkers to capture a specific moment, creating an audio time stamp of the day.

“We’re trying to raise awareness of the interrelationships of sound and listening and environment,” says Leonardson, who serves as cochair of the MSAE. “The best way to do that is through a soundwalk, where you’re not talking about listening but you’re actually doing it. Better to understand just by doing.”

The MSAE usually conducts soundwalks in parks or nature preserves during the spring, summer, and fall, but its first of 2019 is a different kind of undertaking altogether. It’s happening in the downtown pedestrian way system, known as the Chicago Pedway, on Saturday, February 9. The MSAE organized the walk, titled “Hear Below: Listening to Chicago Underground,” in conjunction with another local nonprofit, NON:op Open Opera Works, which stages immersive, site-specific events intended to expand notions of what opera can be. The two groups are frequent collaborators.

Leonardson and Christopher Preissing, founder and director of NON:op, knew a winter event would have to happen indoors. “The soundwalks that I’ve been involved in, participated in, are most often outdoors,” Preissing says. “It was like, ‘What can we do inside that’s interesting, that would involve moving through space?’ The Pedway seemed like a natural option.”

The Pedway provides shelter from the elements as well as access to shops, restaurants, city offices, the Cultural Center, Block 37, and Metra and CTA train lines, among other things. Though it’s cut off from the sounds of nature and of street traffic, the Pedway is a useful place to demonstrate the MSAE’s belief that our sonic surroundings should be a public concern. The organization has never limited its activities to partly wild or unbuilt spaces—

HEAR BELOW: LISTENING TO CHICAGO UNDERGROUND

A soundwalk in the Chicago Pedway, presented by the Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology and NON:op. Sat 2/9, 2 PM, meet in the lobby of One Prudential Plaza, 130 E. Randolph, free, all-ages

it maintains that all environments are worth listening to, and that tuning in to them can better connect us to the good and bad in our communities.

“A soundwalk can present you with those things that you don’t care for in your sound environment,” Leonardson says. “You can find the things that are interesting and engaging as well as the things that are problematic. But [a soundwalk is] historically engaging people with their listening and their own physical role and experience in the social as well as the individual realm. I think that ties back to why it really is a public dialogue and needs to be understood like that.”

Leonardson, 60, grew up in the western suburb of Elmhurst, and from an early age he had a knack for drawing and painting. As a student at York Community High School, he thought he might go on to art school and become a commercial artist. “I really sucked at all the other things,” he says. “If there was one thing I could excel at, I had this gift for drawing.”

He also played percussion in a drum and bugle corps, but at the time he considered music merely a hobby. He was just beginning to discover avant-garde art, and an encounter with the work of Iannis Xenakis, an architect and civil engineer turned composer and music theorist, opened his eyes to its possibilities.

“It blew my mind,” Leonardson says. He was particularly impressed by Xenakis’s use of musique concrète, an experimental ➔

FEB
9



ANDERS OSBORNE

FEB
10



**FOX CROSSING
STRINGBAND** - 12PM

FEB
10



**ANITA WILSON
WITH DANTE HALL**

FEB
11



RUEN BROTHERS

FEB
12



**HUDSON TAYLOR
WITH CRAIG STRICKLAND**

FEB
13



PATRIZIO BUANNE

FEB
14
-
16



**10,000 MANIACS
ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY RUN**

FEB
17



**CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC
CHAMBER PLAYERS
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE**

FEB
17



KANDACE SPRINGS

FEB
18



**DONAVON
FRANKENREITER**

FEB
19



VICTOR GARCIA

FEB
20
+
21



PROCOL HARUM

FEB
22
+
23



**BOBBY MCFERRIN
& GIMME5: CIRCLESONGS**

FEB
24



**THE FOUR C NOTES
FRANKIE VALLI TRIBUTE**

FEB
24



FUNKADESI

FEB
25
+
26



**STEVE EARLE
WITH SHANNON MCNALLY**

FEB
27



**ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY
JAZZ GOES TO THE MOVIES**

MAR
1



WE BANJO 3

MAR
3



**JD SOUTHER &
KARLA BONOFF**

MAR
4
+
5



AARON NEVILLE

continued from 28

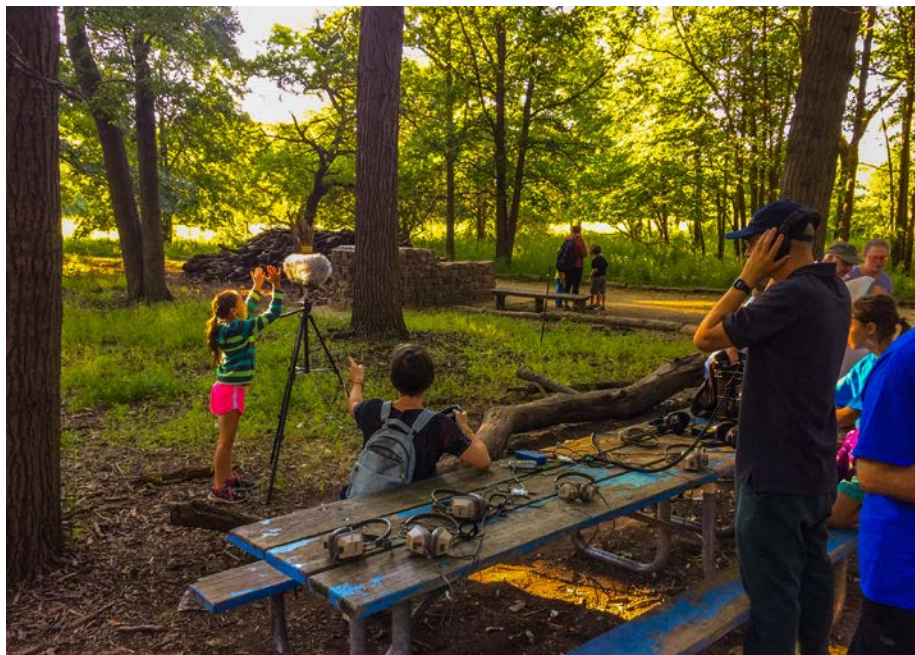
form characterized by the manipulation of recorded sounds as raw material. “You record a sound and play it backwards or slow down or speed up the tape, and then you produce a new sound out of real-world sounds,” Leonardson explains. “It was so much like the sonic version of a surrealist painting to me. It evoked these really alien spaces and worlds in my imagination.”

As an undergraduate at Northern Illinois University in the late 1970s, he wanted to pursue video art, then a cutting-edge medium. Unfortunately the price of the gear was cutting-edge too. “To have your video kit to make video art—no way, that stuff was just way out of reach financially,” he says. He found sound equipment more accessible, and eventually he acquired a microphone, a reel-to-reel recorder, and a used analog synthesizer. In 1983 he earned an MFA in Time Arts from SAIC—the school’s sound department didn’t yet offer a master’s degree, so he’d entered a program that grouped other time-based media such as video and performance.

“I just shifted my focus to sound, because I realized sound was so important to making video work,” Leonardson says. “And actually it was more interesting. There were things on the fringes of punk rock and experimental music and art. There was all this experimentation going on. I was like, ‘Yeah, let’s see what we can do.’ I was making noise with other musicians that didn’t know how to play their instruments. But that was OK, because it was punk rock. It was more about what you had to say than having technique.”

After graduation Leonardson continued to compose and perform, solo and in various experimental improvising groups. He also began to develop a fascination with acoustic ecology. “I was interested in radio art and things like that,” he says. “These other ways to work with sound as an art practice was my exploration. Acoustic ecology fed into that because it incorporated the ecological, the social, all these other aspects of sound outside the arts, it seemed—including them, though, and actually creating an interdisciplinary or holistic way.”

The field of acoustic ecology was even more niche ten or 20 years ago than it is today, but it started to gain traction in the U.S. in the mid- to late 2000s. In 2008, Chicago writer and multidisciplinary artist Dan Godston founded the World Listening Project, a group devoted to understanding the natural environment through listening and field recording; Leonardson is currently its executive director. Around that same time, a loose sound collec-



A July 2017 soundwalk led by MSAE founder Eric Leonardson with Carl Strang and the Singing Insects Monitoring Program at North Park Village Nature Center. © ERIC LEONARDSON

tive called Chicago Phonography first convened to perform live improvisations using field recordings from around the city.

“There seemed to be a group of people interested in field recording, acoustic ecology, and so forth, and it was really interesting because I thought I was the only freak around here that cared about this,” Leonardson says.

The American Society for Acoustic Ecology formed in 2006, and chapters sprang up in New York City, the Bay Area, and New Mexico, among other places. In 2009 Leonardson decided to start a chapter for the midwest. “I didn’t know of anything going on elsewhere in the middle of the country,” he says. “So I was bold, or idiotic, and called it Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology. We became a formal chapter of American Society for Acoustic Ecology, which is associated with this group that was formed 25 years ago, the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology.”

Today the MSAE has seven board members, Leonardson among them, who are involved in all its major decisions. And dozens of other folks around Chicago are affiliated with the group in other ways, often as teaching artists or in occasional supporting roles—they’ve included composer and Experimental Sound Studio treasurer Ed Herrmann, sound artist and teacher Monica Ryan, experimental musician Anthony Janas, and recording engineer and TV Pow multi-instrumentalist Todd Carter.

Leonardson says that part of what first drew him to acoustic ecology and the study of soundscapes was how new the field was. “It all started up in the 70s, and so it wasn’t until the 80s [that] it had some interest in little places,” he says. “I didn’t know much about it myself. Maybe for that reason I was drawn to it: ‘What is this about sound?’”

“Simply put, a soundwalk is any excursion whose main purpose is listening to the environment,” writes Hildegard Westerkamp, a German-born Canadian composer and acoustic ecologist, in the 2006 essay “Soundwalking as Ecological Practice.” “It is in the meeting between such a listener and the sonic environment where the seeds for environmental change are planted.”

Westerkamp’s definition was formative for Leonardson, yet every artist evolves an individual approach to soundwalks. “Once you do it, it’s a practice,” he says. “For that practice to develop, you need a diversity of approaches and dialogues.”

In 2016, the MSAE’s free public soundwalk series became part of the Chicago Park District’s Night Out in the Parks. Each year the group brings in a variety of teaching artists to host walks, the themes of which have included learning the calls of Chicagoland frogs and using special listening stations to hear the sounds just below the surface of Lake Michigan.

“It’s a good fit for the parks,” says Sean Heaney, a senior program specialist for the Park District. “Because the parks deal in public space, and the soundwalk series is basically inviting folks to better understand those public spaces but also connect deeper with them, connect deeper with their sound, connect deeper with themselves, and connect deeper with others around them.”

Local artist Norman Long, a member of the MSAE’s board, has been leading soundwalks with the group since around 2013, and he’s been part of it since 2010. “In my practice as an artist, I like to connect people with their community, history, culture, and ecology,” he says. Last year he hosted a soundwalk in Calumet Park that looked at the neighborhood’s industrial history.

“I like to introduce people to those things—sort of have a historical aspect on my walks,” he says. “I take it as also a walking meditation. So I do a series of ear-calibration exercises and mindfulness exercises.”

Long hopes that people leave his walks newly receptive to their sonic environments. “It really is this idea of being able to listen—just this openness to listen and to connect through sound,” he says. “It’s a kind of sensitivity that we all can have, and then we can act on that basis as well. When I do a soundwalk or when I started leading these walking meditations, it was to calm myself down and to actually feel connected to my community.”

Performance and sound artist Amanda Gutiérrez, also a board member of the MSAE, was already incorporating walking into her practice when she met Leonardson in 2015. At the time she was part of a *dérive* group in Pilsen—that is, a group of people who travel quickly through a landscape in unplanned ways, hoping to shake their observations free of everyday associations and relations. (Guy Debord formalized the concept in the 1950s with an essay called “Theory of the *Dérive*.”) For Gutiérrez, leading soundwalks is particularly relevant to her work: she’s pursuing a PhD at the University of Girona in Spain on the soundscapes of immigrant communities.

Gutiérrez chose to keep her soundwalks in Pilsen, with people interested not only in sounds of nature but also in sounds of the city. “Sounds of pollution are something that are really in our everyday life and are affecting us,” she says. “Especially in Pilsen, because it’s surrounded by sonic pollution—the airport, factories like a constant hum, and the freeways.”

Being part of the MSAE has helped Gutiérrez feel welcome in the local sound community, an

experience she hasn't enjoyed everywhere—in her native Mexico City, she feels the scene remains “very male oriented.” She says Leonardson has been open and inviting to artists of color without tokenizing them. “He’s very self-aware of his role and also opening up the little space that he has for other voices, which is very strange to see,” she adds. “I think the Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology is opening up and diversifying those observations about soundscape.”

The lobby of One Prudential Plaza is opulent and gray. Light gleams off gray marble floors, soft gray chairs rest on a neutral gray rug, and a row of gray columns runs lengthwise through the room, reaching upward to meet a gray-striped ceiling. But on the back wall, facing the entrance, hangs a giant flat-screen TV that’s easily the length of a pickup truck, displaying beautiful aerial nature footage likely shot by a drone. Sunlight pours from behind a forest of Douglas firs; an overhead shot looks down on snow-covered trees. It’s a perfect if somewhat ironic place to begin the “Hear Below” soundwalk.

“The starting point in the Prudential center, it’s really a visually splendid space,” Leonardson says. “We may want to explore that with our eyes open and then our eyes closed. A simple thing—just to close your eyes and listen for a while. The brain kicks in and fills the gap.”

Just after 5 PM on a weekday in the Pru-

dential lobby, adult contemporary music plays faintly in the background, quiet enough to go unnoticed. The clacking footsteps of commuters, hurrying downstairs to catch the subway, pass by in a thin but unbroken stream. A woman in heels stomps past. Some people head downstairs carrying on conversations in low tones. At the bottom of a short flight of stairs, a revolving door opens on the Pedway. It produces a low thwacking sound as it turns, depositing commuters in a relatively busy thoroughfare where the level of ambient sound suddenly rises. Restaurants and businesses are open to customers on either side of the hallway.

According to the city, the Pedway is traversed by tens of thousands of pedestrians every day. “When I walked through it, what I noticed right away is that there are different spaces, and they’re all visually different—but they are all acoustically different,” Preissing says. “There’s literally doors at either end, so that when you go into a space there’s kind of like—*thwack*—the door closes and you’re in a new environment.”

Leonardson thinks foot traffic through the space might pose a challenge, depending on how busy the Pedway is on Saturday. “If you want people to navigate with their ears, you actually have to slow down,” he says. “That’s hard to do in certain places.”

Preissing agrees. “Part of what we do at the soundwalks is to try to see with our ears,” he

says. “And consciously make an effort, not stumbling around in the dark, but just allowing ourselves to focus on the ears and what’s coming in there, rather than just the eyes. That means standing someplace or moving slowly or having some kind of guided experience—then it really opens things up.”

No matter what happens in the Pedway, it’s ultimately part of the environment the walkers are there to experience. Leonardson isn’t particularly concerned about potential difficulties—like R. Murray Schafer before him, he cares more about what can happen when people stop listening or become closed off from their surroundings.

“The people, there in my mind, are not just specialists—technical engineers or musicians or people involved in sound,” Leonardson says. “The people are all the people, all the human species, aside from things that might impair one’s ability to hear. It’s first and foremost a public concern, because it’s about quality of the environment. That’s why I think the public dialogue is necessary.”

Another lesson he’s taken from Schafer is that if you want to inspire people to act constructively, you can’t focus solely on the negative. “You can point out all the terrible things that happen to whales due to anthropogenic noise in oceans,” Leonardson says. “Yeah, it is dire and it is heartbreaking and it must be curtailed somehow. But to get people activated, you also have to focus on what you love about sound. That’s why this focus on soundwalking is important too. You’re directly engaged with listening.”

Leonardson will share his enthusiasm for sound at the Wild Things Conference on Saturday, February 23, at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont. At this daylong event, which celebrates local nature and the ways people enjoy and protect it, he’ll lead a session on acoustic ecology. The MSAE is also busy confirming its summer soundwalk series with the Park District, details of which will be made public in May. Leonardson looks forward to continuing to help diversify the field of acoustic ecology, by working to ensure that the MSAE reflects the community it serves.

“The public is a very diverse public, so we have to have everyone involved,” he says. “I think we try to be very aware and conscious of that. And what’s going on in the current sociopolitical culture is really making it pretty obvious how urgent it is. It’s just really urgent.”

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The lobby of One Prudential Plaza, where the Chicago Pedway soundwalk “Hear Below” will begin. COURTESY OF SOLOMON CORDWELL BUENZ/DARRIS LEE HARRIS



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 Tue, Feb. 19 - Sean Rowe
 Thu, Feb. 21 - Mary Lane & The No Static Blues Band
 Thu, Feb. 28 - Country Night In Berwyn
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 Party with Marty Sammon and guest vocalist Peaches

IN ROTATION

KAREN HAWKINS

Reader digital managing editor

Why is Erykah Badu trending on Twitter?

Ah, shit. I was at her fateful show on January 19 at the Aragon, and to cope with the aftermath, I've gone to a happy place in my head—namely the week before, when I was listening to her early albums nonstop, blissfully unaware that she was about to step right on in it. Not for nothing is she considered the queen of neosoul, and traveling back to the late 90s and early 00s with her was just the nostalgia I needed.

Prince & the Revolution, *Parade*: Music From the Motion Picture Under the Cherry Moon

I recently got my family to rewatch *Under the Cherry Moon* for the Reader's online Flopcorn feature, and seeing the movie again 30-plus years after its release validated all of our initial opinions: the soundtrack is absolutely amazing, and the movie is . . . not. Fortunately, *Parade* is joyous, sexy, and infectious enough to stand on its own, and if you love the album but have never seen the movie, you've saved yourself 100 valuable minutes.



Prince's music for *Under the Cherry Moon* almost redeems the movie.

Quincy Jones's version of "Maybe God Is

Tryin' to Tell You Somethin'" Despite my Methodist upbringing, I'm far from religious (sorry mom), but thanks to years of church services and riding around in my mother's car, I have a deep appreciation for gospel music embedded in my DNA. This song from the soundtrack to *The Color Purple* has all the elements that make gospel speak even to the likes of me: soul-stirring vocals and instrumentation and a you-betta-wake-up message.

GLITTER MONEYYYY Political party rappers Queen Trashley and TayyySlayyy

Quay Dash About once a week, I stay up till sunrise listening to new music, and it was on

one of those nights that I discovered New York rapper Quay Dash. Her 2018 single "U.A.F.W.M." is aggressive, sexy, provocative, and challenging, and it encompasses exactly how I feel when I strut my sexy self into neighborhood dive bars dressed in black leather from head to toe. Quay Dash is demanding to be heard and respected—and look, you have no choice. Bow down. —**QUEEN TRASHLEY**



New York rapper Quay Dash @ SERENA JARA

Tasha I discovered Chicago singer-songwriter Tasha on a friend's playlist and was immediately in love. She simultaneously wraps me in political resistance with "fuck the police" poetry and reminds me how self-love and -care are acts of rebellion. In her tenderness there's an immovable presence—she's strong and soft, fighting and flourishing. "Kind of Love" hits me straight in the feels. The melody puts those young-love butterflies right in my tummy. I'm so excited to hear more from Tasha. —**TAYYYYSLAYYYY**

Perfume Genius I was introduced to the music of Perfume Genius in 2014, when I heard the big drums, airy defiance, and luxurious synthesizers of the song "Queen." Perfume Genius make daring, radical love music, and when I recently saw them perform 2017's *No Shape* (opening for Florence & the Machine) I was transformed. Their songs are so personal and gut-wrenching. Music is most exciting for me when it's rebellious and full of love, and Perfume Genius capture this perfectly. —**QUEEN TRASHLEY**

VAGABOND MAURICE

Dragon, lyricist, Afro-nerd

Uyama Hiroto Ever since discovering late producer Nujabes via *Samurai Champloo* back in the day, I've always found the music of his constant collaborator Uyama Hiroto to stand out on the tracks where he's featured. His style ushers in a heavy down-tempo and ambient-jazz feel, which takes inspiration and influence from hip-hop—and those are all things I love. Also, I've kept his record *Freeform Jazz* spinning since it dropped in 2016.

Mahalia I stumbled onto Mahalia—a British singer who pairs her sultry vocals with honey- and soul-like compositions—through someone's Instagram video of her performance on the YouTube music series Colors. If that's not music discovery through the grapevine, I don't know what is! Since then I've been keeping an eye and ear out for her tunes, and she's continued to impress with all her releases—especially with a stunning visual for one of her songs that gave me the same feel I got from the Pharcyde's "Drop."



British singer Mahalia
 @ COURTESY ATLANTIC RECORDS

Black Thought What more is there to say about Tariq Trotter, the legendary MC and front man of the Roots? My pops been listening to them since '95, so by extension I've been an active participant and fan for just as long. Black Thought's 2017 Funk Flex masterclass freestyle reminded everyone how ill he's continued to be, and in 2018 he dropped a handful of releases throughout the year. To my delight, his multisyllabic Afrocentric lyricism remains, evolving along with the music.

PICK OF THE WEEK

Wadada Leo Smith returns to Chicago to conduct the AACM Great Black Music Ensemble



JIMMY KATZ

WADADA LEO SMITH & THE GREAT BLACK MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Sun 2/10, 7 PM, Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60th, \$20, \$10 students.

FOUR YEARS AFTER its golden anniversary, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians asserts a contemporary presence that extends its legacy. The organization first convened on Chicago's south side as a collective, community-rooted effort to create possibilities for African-American musicians of all ages and experience levels to present their own music. In 2018 the AACM Great Black Music Ensemble—a variably sized group whose repertoire includes new work as well as pieces by AACM members—has played monthly concerts at the Stony Island Arts Bank with guests such as Makaya McCraven, Marvin Tate, and Ben Lamar Gay. For tonight's fund-raiser concert, the GBME will shift to the Logan Center for the Arts Performance Hall and welcome a venerated trumpeter and early member of the AACM: Wadada Leo Smith. Among the first things Smith did when he moved to Chicago in 1967 was ring up multi-instrumentalist Anthony Braxton and start playing and sharing compositions with him and other AACM members. He didn't stick around long—Smith, Braxton, and AACM violinist Leroy Jenkins left town for Paris in 1969—but he's regularly returned to perform with AACM-associated groups ever since. Smith's latest album, *Rosa Parks: Pure Love* (TUM), is an oratorio that weaves an international quartet of woman singers, string and trumpet quartets, and samples of music by his old traveling companions Braxton and Jenkins into a quiltlike assemblage of reflections upon the necessity and enduring example of the mid-20th-century civil rights movement. But for this appearance, he will first present material from *Solo: Reflections and Meditations on Monk* (TUM), an unaccompanied trumpet recital that explores and extends the sublime melodies and meaningful silences of Thelonious Monk's music. In the second set, Smith will conduct the AACM Great Black Music Ensemble's performances of "Joy: Spiritual: Fire," a piece he composed for his electric-guitar-oriented band Organic, and the orchestral "Queen Hatshepsut," an orchestral piece dedicated to the female pharaoh from the 15th century BCE. —BILL MEYER

THURSDAY7

INTERPOL *Sunflower Bean* opens. 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State, \$30-\$50.

It's hard to think of another band that defined turn-of-the-century indie-rock hipness quite like Interpol. Taking the stage dressed in crisp three-piece suits and hammering out emotionless, crystalline post-punk with a strong nod to Joy Division, they'd set the blueprint for how young New York bands should look and feel by the time of the breakout success of their debut full-length, 2002's *Turn on the Bright Lights*. In retrospect, it's strange to think about what

direction indie rock would have taken in those days if they hadn't made such an indelible mark. By the next decade, that buttoned-up aesthetic had given way to other trends and scenes, but though the Interpol hype train slowed down some, the band never stopped putting out records. On their sixth full-length, last summer's *Marauder* (Matador), Interpol sound like they're aging nicely; they lay out their signature straightforward postpunk revival grooves with a bit more warmth and soul than ever before. Interpol have never attempted to reinvent themselves to fit the time, and that's fine—with *Marauder*, they show the world that if it ain't broke, don't fix it. —LUCA CIMARUSTI

JAYAIRE WOODS *J-Trigg* and *L_ouie D* open. 7:30 PM, Subterranean, 2011 W. North, \$10. 21+

During the fading final notes of "Big Plans," the cloudy closing track on Jayaire Woods's August EP, *Woodside Lane*, a coterie of the rapper's pals shouts the song's succinct chorus a cappella. Woods is such a skilled songwriter that his most potent verses beg to be shouted aloud even when you're not listening to his music (thankfully I'm usually in the privacy of my own home when that happens to me). I could drive myself mad wondering why Woods hasn't broken bigger, and I'm not the only one who thinks he should be headlining theaters rather than playing small clubs—in 2017, peerless rap site ➔

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MUSIC

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Passion of the Weiss ran a lengthy piece on Woods that argued he's Chicago's most underrated rapper. (He grew up in the western suburb of Bellwood.) Woods's easygoing melodic sensibilities and intimate lyricism led Atlanta's Quality Control to sign him and put him on tour with label darling Lil Yachty in 2016, when Yachty was one of the hottest commodities in rap (that same year, Yachty made one of his strongest guest verses on the Woods full-length *Free the Fall*). Last year Woods began releasing tracks through Layup Entertainment, whose cofounder, Stan Lane, produced *Woodside Lane*. He gives the 17-minute EP emotional weight from its first track, and on "4 Walls" he grapples with depression, failure, alcoholism, and creative frustration—and that's just in the first minute. Since the start of

the year Woods has dropped a couple singles that show he's as focused and perceptive as ever, including "Pretty Girls," a full-hearted, slightly awkward tribute to women, who bear the brunt of toxic masculinity. —LEOR GALIL

FRIDAY8

BOY HARSHER See also *Sunday. Nightcrlr* and *Grün Wasser* open. 9 PM, *Empty Bottle*, 1035 N. Western, sold out. 21+

Don't let the name fool you—the feverish, furious electronic nightmare-pop produced by Massachusetts duo Boy Harsher leaves the gen-



Boy Harsher
© EBRU YILDIZ

der binary feeling as antiquated as a phonograph. Vocalist Jae Matthews and producer Augustus Muller are intimately obsessed with the tactile urgency of now, and their musical language is born of chaotic, reactionary emotional shards. The new *Careful* (Nude Club), their third full-length, explores the wreckage of explosive love, and not necessarily the romantic kind. It follows the plight of Matthews's mother as she develops dementia, and tracks such as the slow, foreboding opener, "Keep Driving," serve as a reminder of how agony can, twistedly, take its time. In their live

performances Matthews—who had the word "careful" tattooed on her body onstage just before a 2017 show the duo intended to be their last—is a thrashing force while Muller fumes behind a minimal gear setup, which leaves even more space for them to exorcise their fury (inasmuch as they can in 2019). Boy Harsher are harsh, that much is true, but they're harsh with a purpose; their frenetic shows are invitations for audience members to headbang out their own personal torments to the groove. —MEAGAN FREDETTE

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12PM-FREE HANDMADE MARKET NAKED GIANTS TWEN • THE EVENING ATTRACTION	THU 2/14 ROZZ TOX PRESENTS PHUONG-DAN ITSI • HIGGY • BEAU WANZER (DJ SET)
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SUN 2/10 3PM-FREE BOY HARSHER NGHTCRWLRL • THOOM	FRI 2/15 GROUPE MATCHLESS

2/16: DARK FOG (RECORD RELEASE), 2/17: PITCHFORK MIDWINTER AFTERPARTY FEAT. TORTOISE, 2/18: YAWN (FREE), 2/19: PUSSY FOOT (FINAL SHOW), 2/20: WONDER & SKEPTICISM, 2/22: TY SEGALL & WHITE FENCE, 2/22-23 @ ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL: PETER MURPHY 40 YEARS OF BAUHAUS, 2/23 @ OUTSIDE THE EMPTY BOTTLE: MUSIC FROZEN DANCING: A WINTER BLOCK PARTY (1PM-FREE), 2/23: WINDY CITY SOUL CLUB, 2/24: ERIC DONTÉ, 2/27: THE CHILLS, 2/28: MIKE KROL, 3/1: BLOODIEST, 3/2: ABSOLUTELY NOT (RECORD RELEASE), 3/3: PSYCHEDELIC PORN CRUMPETS, 3/4: THE C.I.A., 3/7 @THE ART INSTITUTE: BODY/HEAD
NEW ON SALE: 3/7: RESILIENCE BENEFIT FEAT. IMPULSIVE HEARTS (EP RELEASE), 3/12: GOOSE ISLAND 312 DAY FEATURING POST ANIMAL, 3/19: BE FOREST, 3/20: MOLLY NILSSON, 3/24: THE GOOCH PALMS, 4/5: DAVID QUINN, 4/14: ALDOUS HARDING

Find more music listings at
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MUSIC



Lucrecia Dalt
 © AINA CLIMENT

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY Crowbar, Weedeater, and Mothership open. 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, 1375 W. Lake, sold out. 17+

In the early 1980s, North Carolina's Corrosion of Conformity built a cult following with their thrashy, no-frills hardcore punk, but they catapulted to mainstream success in the mid-90s when they slowed down into sludgy southern stoner metal—a transition amplified by second guitarist Pepper Keenan taking over vocals. They've remained one of the most revered bands in the subgenre ever since, even through two hiatuses and several lineup changes. After nearly a decade away from the group, Keenan reclaimed his old role in a touring capacity in 2015, and in 2018 he rejoined core members Woody Weatherman and Mike Dean in the studio to record their first album together since 2005. The result, *No Cross No Crown* (Nuclear Blast), is a surprisingly tight return to form, with Keenan's raspy yet soulful singing laid atop over-driven sludge, Skynyrdesque guitar squalls, and melancholic interludes. For every track that clubs you over the head ("Cast the First Stone"), there's a slow-burning wailer ("Nothing Left to Say") or an unexpected detour (a metallic rendition of Queen's "Son and Daughter"). Ever the road warriors, CoC return to Chicago with support from fellow stoner stalwarts Crowbar, Weedeater, and Mothership. Light a blunt and prepare to bang your head into oblivion. —SCOTT MORROW

LUCRECIA DALT *Bitchin Bajas* open. 9 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, \$10. 21+

Colombian producer Lucrecia Dalt worked as a geotechnical engineer before she made crafting experimental electronics tracks a full-time endeavor. In May, Dalt, who now calls Berlin home, released her sixth album, *Anticlines* (Rvng Intl), which is named for an archlike geological feature of folded sedimentary layers. The album's minimal, echoing sounds encourage anyone listening to decipher what exactly brought each note to light, to guess what each little detail could mean or reference, and to consider the sonic possibilities and unheard histories in the spaces around them. Dalt has told *Fact* magazine that she didn't intend to make any of the sounds on *Anticlines* reflect her previous occupation: "I'm not making something very direct, like how can I make this sound like rocks?" But intentional or not, a scientific quality remains. Dalt includes lyrics only sparingly, and they're often fragmented verses—spoken in a severe monotone—that describe parts of bodies and physical objects, sometimes with clinical specificity. And in a May interview with the *Quietus*, Dalt said she envisions her *Anticlines* stage show as a formally academic display: "I was thinking of a lecture because of the subjects I'm dealing with in the lyrics. It's a lecture that is alienated or haunted by a musical performance. This is an attempt at finding ways to make my stage persona more active, confrontational, and also to add more nuances to my work." I'm still not sure ➔

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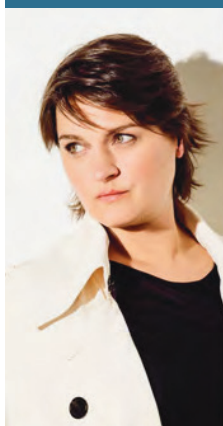
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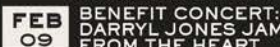
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MUSIC



Philmore Greene
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continued from 35

how she's translated that live, but in any case she's a perfect fit for the Hideout's experimental series, Resonance, which hosts her tonight. —**LEOR GALIL**

PHILMORE GREENE *Rashid Hadee and Vic Spencer open. 8 PM, Emporium Arcade Bar, 1366 N. Milwaukee. 21+ FREE*

Local rapper Philmore Greene dropped his debut album, *Chicago: A Third World City* (One of One Music Group), in December, but it sounds like it could have come out in the 90s—its lifeblood is the kind of confident, luxuriant boom-bap that east-coast hip-hop acts regularly cranked out back then. “That’s what makes me comfortable,” Greene said of his sonic aesthetics in a December interview with YouTube talk show *Beerz & Barz*. “That’s what I came up on, that’s what I fell in love with.” Veteran Chicago rapper-producer Rashid Hadee built most of *A Third World City* with input from Greene over the course of roughly five years. Greene shows some fealty to Hadee’s instrumentals, and he always ensures that the tone of his voice and the shape of his words supercharge the heavyweight beats. On “Tomorrow,” Greene raps about finding hope while struggling against the riptide of systemic injustice and racial inequality—the way his voice skips across the track’s slender percussion accentuates its aspirational spirit. —**LEOR GALIL**

POPPY *Flint Eastwood opens. 6:30 PM, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, \$20-\$25. ALL*

Poppy is the patron saint of the extremely online: a pop star who never pretends to be anything other than an Internet-inspired construct. With her high-fashion-meets-Silicon-Valley aesthetic and a persona that seems part robot, part alien, and part algorithm turned flesh, she toes the line between art-house experiment and modern-fame meme through her heavily produced songs and bizarre YouTube videos. But though Poppy might strike some as satirical, her music comes off as pretty earnest. Her surprisingly mainstream electro-bops would fit in well on a playlist with tracks from pop cool girls Charli XCX and Kim Petras, and she also

loves a little camp: in the video for the song “Computer Boy” she croons, “I fell in love with the man of the future / I’ve got a thing for my laptop computer” while surrounded by masked men holding desktop monitors. In contrast, her viral YouTube videos feel like something Andy Warhol might have produced if he’d had access to a Vine account: Poppy eating four ring pops at once, Poppy reciting the lyrics to Camila Cabello’s “Havana” in her signature ASMR baby voice, Poppy listing places people can go to share their outrage online before staring wide-eyed into the camera and announcing, “We’re having so much fun on the Internet.” To love Poppy is to be in on the joke. On her previous tour, her friend Charlotte—an actual mannequin—opened each night with a “DJ set.” In an era of social-media scammers and Fyre fraudsters, Poppy’s calculated shallowness comes as a relief. No need to look past the surface—she’s the shiny, seductive oil slick sitting on top. —**MEGAN KIRBY**

SATURDAY9

MASTERS OF HAWAIIAN MUSIC: GEORGE KAHUMOKU JR., NATHAN AWEAU, AND KAWIKA KAHIAPO *8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln, \$26, \$24 members. ALL*

George Kahumoku Jr., Nathan Aweau, and Kawika Kahiapo are masterful slack-key guitarists whose music embodies Hawaiian traditions, and between the three of them, they certainly have the accolades and awards to prove it—Kahumoku, for instance, is a four-time Grammy winner. Their six- and 12-string skills are unquestionable, and between their playing and their distinct ways of incorporating Hawaiian culture into their music, they’ve each fashioned a niche as viable singer-songwriters. Kahumoku is devoted to keeping indigenous Hawaiian music going strong, and in addition to his albums and performances, he’s taught, appeared in music documentaries, and written books to spread the slack-key gospel (and in 2015, he performed a duet with Tia Carrere on the revived *Hawaii Five-O* television show). Aweau is an accomplished multi-instrumentalist with an extensive background as

a jazz bassist. In addition to mastering the slack-key style, Kahiapo has applied the same fingerings to the ukulele, and has a repertoire that's equally influenced by his Christian spirituality and by the Hawaiian music he grew up around—he was first inspired to try his hand at slack-key guitar when influential Hawaiian guitarist and family friend Gabby Pahinui would drop by his garage for jam sessions. —JAMES PORTER

WINTER BLOCK PARTY X Featuring *Mother Nature*, *MFN Melo*, *Jesse de la Peña*, and others. Noon, Metro, 3730 N. Clark. **FREE**

By early February, many Chicagoans don't wanna do anything more adventurous than curl up under a blanket with a book and a mug of something hot. But Metro, WBEZ, Vocalo, and Young Chicago Authors could lure even the most cold-weather-averse hip-hop fans to Wrigleyville for Winter Block Party X: This Is Chicago. Unlike summer block parties, with their street-side bounce houses and water-balloon fights, the Winter Block Party moves its attractions—which include music performances, poetry, live art, and even a pop-up barber shop—indoors out of the elements. The daytime portion, which runs from noon to 6 PM, is decidedly kid friendly, with a dance workshop, face painting, a break-dance battle, an MC Olympics, and a turntable showcase from Vocalo host (and DJ) Jesse de la Peña. Things get a bit more grown-up from 6 to 10 PM (though both events are open to all ages). The evening bill is headlined by political MC duo Mother Nature and includes smooth rapper MFN Melo, who's been known to rhyme over lute-infused samples; poet and mentor Navarro, whose music reflects his Mexican-American identity; singer-songwriter Loona Dae, who writes her own tunes but also covers (and draws comparisons to) Erykah Badu; and a Secret Wall Battle from hip-hop production collective the Molemen. Those who live too far to make the party are in luck too—Vocalo will host a live radio broadcast from the event. —KIRSTEN LAMBERT

SUNDAY10

BOY HARSHER See *Friday. Nightcrwlr* and *Thoom* open. 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$14, \$12 in advance. 21+

KITKA 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 N. Lincoln, \$22, \$20 members. **18**

This Oakland-based women's choir specialize in vocal traditions from eastern Europe, including styles from Russia, the Balkans, Greece, and Turkey. Like their compatriots Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares, Kitka perform both traditional music and original compositions, and have lent their shimmering, otherworldly tones to film soundtracks (in their case, *Braveheart*, *Jacob's Ladder*, and *The Queen of the Damned*). They've created a multidisciplinary work inspired by the Women in Black anti-war movement, released albums focusing on Jewish and Romani music, created an ambitious concept album, *The Rusalka Cycle* (based on Slavic folklore about vengeful female spirits), and collaborated with avant-garde composer Meredith Monk. Kitka's latest release, last year's *Evening Star*, was a long time coming; it's a follow-up to their 2003 full-length *Wintersongs*, a compilation of holiday songs, choral pieces, folk tunes, and other music rooted in the colder months (though they've released several other albums in between). *Evening Star* is an equally diverse collection of pieces; it's unified around a framework of "cosmic wonders and earthly rituals of the winter season" and features singing in 12 different languages. With Kitka's united voices rippling and pulsing like the aurora borealis, revealing layers upon layers of texture, the album sounds at once ancient and futuristic. —MONICA KENDRICK

WADADA LEO SMITH & THE GREAT BLACK MUSIC ENSEMBLE See *Pick of the Week*, page 33. 7 PM, Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60th, \$20, \$10 students. **18**



Kitka **18** TOMAS PACHA



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 SAT FEB 23 WITH
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FRED ARMISEN
 SAT MAR 02
 9:30PM / 18+



TEENAGE FANCLUB
 THE LOVE LANGUAGE
 WED MAR 06
 7:30PM / 18+



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Vocalo 91.1, Young Chicago Authors, and WBEZ present
WINTER BLOCK PARTY X: THIS IS CHICAGO
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 MOLEMAN / DJ CA\$H ERA

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 DJ SCARY LADY SARAH

THURSDAY FEB 21 / 7:30PM / ALL AGES

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Avey Tare 4/6, 7 PM, Co-Prosperity Sphere
Be Forest 3/19, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Bear's Den 5/27, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 17+
Andrew Belle 5/23, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Roy Blair 4/19, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge
Zac Brown Band 6/29, 7 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park, on sale Fri 2/8, noon
Captain Beyond 4/12, 8 PM, Reggie's Music Joint
Brandi Carlile 6/29, 7:30 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Cave Twins 4/3, 8 PM, 210 Live, Highwood
Avishai Cohen Quartet 3/21, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+
Combichrist 5/5, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Cursive, Mewithoutyou, Appleseed Cast 5/8, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 17+
Daedelus 3/23, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
Don Dietrich 3/4, 7:30 PM, Experimental Sound Studio
Dollyrots 3/14, 7 PM, Reggie's Music Joint
Billie Eilish 6/9, 6:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 2/8, noon
Robert Ellis 3/28, 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 2/8, 8 AM
Florence & the Machine, Blood Orange 5/23, 7:30 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion, on sale Fri 2/8, 11 AM

Bill Frisell's Harmony 4/5, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 2/8, 8 AM
Kevin Gates, NBA Youngboy, Moneybagg Yo 3/16, 7 PM, UIC Pavilion
Gooch Palms 3/24, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Holdup 3/10, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+
Ionnalee 4/28, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 17+
Iron Reagan, Sacred Reich, Leeway 5/15, 6 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, on sale Fri 2/8, 9 AM, 17+
Japanese Breakfast 3/12, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 17+
Darius Jones 3/18, 7:30 PM, Experimental Sound Studio
La Dispute, Gouge Away 4/23, 6:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Mark Lanegan Band 5/7, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 17+
Lemonheads, Tommy Stinson 5/10, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, noon, 17+
Lil Baby, City Girls 4/1, 8 PM, Riviera Theatre, 18+
Fenne Lily 3/6, 8 PM, Tack Room
Lizzo 5/3, 8 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Loma Prieta 8/1, 9 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+
Lord Huron, Bully 7/26, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 2/8, 11 AM
Del McCoury Band 5/2, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 2/7, noon
Pat McLaughlin Band 3/29, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 2/8, 11 AM
Lisa Mezzacappa 3/25, 7:30 PM, Experimental Sound Studio

Michael J. Miles 5/4, 7:30 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 2/8, 8 AM
Mustard Plug 5/3, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Jade Novah 3/3, 7 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+
Onra 4/28, 8:30 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Our Last Night, I See Stars 3/16, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 18+
Passion Pit 5/15, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Omara Portuondo 5/1, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 2/8, 8 AM
Post Animal 3/12, 9 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Princess 6/14, 9 PM, Park West, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 18+
Red Wanting Blue 3/27, 8 PM, Subterranean
Roy Rogers & the Delta Rhythm Kings 3/30, 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 2/8, 8 AM
Running Touch 5/10, 8 PM, Chop Shop, 18+
Scientists 4/10, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Shinedown, Badflower, Dinosaur Pile-Up 7/14, 6:30 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Specials 6/8, 7:30 PM, the Vic, 18+
Sunn O))), Papa M 4/19, 7 PM, Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Thou, Emma Ruth Rundle 3/29, 9 PM, Subterranean, 17+
TR/ST 5/10, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM, 18+
Twin Peaks, Rookie 3/12, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM

Twista, Do or Die, Crucial Conflict 3/8, 9:30 PM, Joe's Bar
Twiztid 3/23, 6:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Vampire Weekend 6/16, 6:30 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion, on sale Fri 2/8, noon
Biliana Youtchkova & Jakob Warmenbol 3/11, 7:30 PM, Experimental Sound Studio
Wallows 5/15, 7:30 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
We Three 3/28, 7:30 PM, Park West, on sale Fri 2/8, 10 AM
Louis York & the Shindellas 4/3, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 2/7, noon

UPDATED

Kacey Musgraves 3/25, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, rescheduled from 1/31
Pup 5/4, 7:30 PM and 5/23, 7 PM, Metro, second show added

UPCOMING

Acid Mothers Temple, Yaman-taka // Sonic Titan 4/13, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Action Bronson, Meyhem Lauren 2/23, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+
Architects, Thy Art Is Murder 5/25, 6:30 PM, Concord Music Hall
Baroness, Deafheaven 3/31, 6:30 PM, Riviera Theatre
Black Lips, Fucked Up 4/27, 8 PM, Metro, 18+
Cactus Blossoms 4/6, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall
Cannibal Corpse, Morbid Angel, Necrot 3/4, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+
Clan of Xymox, Bellwether Syndicate 3/14, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Coathangers 4/9, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Cold Cave, Adult. 2/27, 8 PM, Metro, 18+
Dead & Company 6/14-15, 7 PM, Wrigley Field
Dengue Fever 5/1, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Elder Island 3/19, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+
Jeremy Enigk 4/9, 8:30 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+
Ex Hex 4/10, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
God Is an Astronaut 9/25, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Grouper 2/15, 7:30 PM, Chicago Athletic Association Hotel
Iceage, Nadah El Shazly 5/7, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Judas Priest 5/25, 8 PM, Rosemont Theater, Rosemont
La Luz 3/22, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Lords of Acid, Orgy, Genitorturers 3/7, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

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Jeff Lynne's ELO 6/27, 8 PM, United Center
Midnight Tyrannosaurus 6/1, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+
Misfits, Fear, Venom Inc. 4/27, 7:30 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont
Kevin Morby, Sam Cohen 6/7-8, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Mountain Goats 5/15-16, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Mudhoney 5/26, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall
Old Time Reljun 5/3, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Jerry Paper 3/23, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Jessica Pratt 5/10, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Priests 4/22, 7:30 PM, Lincoln Hall
Procol Harum 2/20-21, 8 PM, City Winery
Quinn XCII 3/20, 6 PM, Riviera Theatre
Todd Rundgren 4/23-24, 8 PM, Athenaeum Theatre
Travis Scott 2/21, 8 PM, United Center
JD Souther & Karla Bonoff 3/3, 5 and 8 PM, City Winery
Vince Staples, JPEGmafia 3/12, 8:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, Fri 12/14, 10 AM, 18+
Damo Suzuki's Network 5/4-5, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+
Teenage Fanclub 3/6, 7:30 PM, Metro, 18+
The-Dream 2/28, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Turnover, Turnstile 5/2, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall
Jeff Tweedy 3/22-23, 8 PM, the Vic, 18+
Summer Walker 3/21, 7:30 PM, Lincoln Hall
Whitechapel, Dying Fetus 4/25, 5 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+
The Who 5/21, 7:30 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre
Wicca Phase Springs Eternal, Angel Du\$t 3/8, 7 PM, Subterranean
Wild Reeds 4/6, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Ric Wilson 4/13, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 18+
Xiu Xiu 5/17, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Yob, Voivod 3/27, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Yonder Mountain String Band 3/10, 8 PM, Thalia Hall
You Me at Six 3/2, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge
Yuri & Pandora 3/16, 8 PM, Rosemont Theater, Rosemont
Zveri 5/31, 7 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

IN 2016, Reader critic Peter Margasak praised the “astonishing growth” and “cool, agile sound” of boundary-pushing local jazz trio **Twin Talk**, aka reedist **Dustin Laurenzi**, drummer **Andrew Green**, and bassist-vocalist **Katie Ernst**. On Friday, February 8, Twin Talk drop their third record, **Weaver**, via artists' collective and online platform **People**, founded in 2018 by members of the National and Bon Iver. Weaver is full of graceful moments, and Gossip Wolf especially likes the loping rhythms and windswept melodies of “The Sky Never Ends,” which features Ernst's lovely wordless vocals. On Sunday, February 10, Twin Talk celebrate the album's release at the **Hideout** after an opening set from the Twin Cities trio of Mike Lewis, JT Bates, and Jeremy Ylvisaker.

The Girl Talk is a live talk show at the Hideout hosted by **Jen Sabella** and **Erika Wozniak**, who invite prominent women to discuss issues affecting their areas of expertise. It usually happens one Tuesday a month, but on Friday, February 8, the *Girl Talk* gang host a special edition about the history of sexual-abuse allegations against R. Kelly and the developments in the month or so since Lifetime aired the six-part documentary series **Surviving R. Kelly**. Author and critic **Mikki Kendall** and journalist **Jamie Nesbitt Golden** appeared in the series, and they'll talk with Sabella and Wozniak about supporting Kelly's survivors and the **#MuteRKelly** campaign launched after BuzzFeed published an investigation by Jim DeRogatis in July 2017. *The Girl Talk* starts at 6:30 PM, and tickets are \$10.

In December, underappreciated Milwaukee power-pop group **Yipes!** released their first full-length in 38 years, titled **Yipes!!!** Their reunion record features the band's original lineup, and their new songs should hit the same sweet spot as their classic material. On Wednesday, February 13, Yipes! headline the **Beat Kitchen**; tickets cost \$12 and the show starts at 7 PM. —J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

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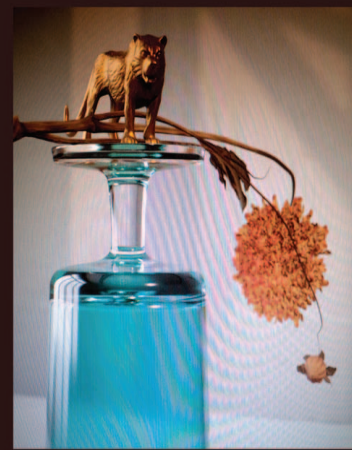
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HELADO NEGRO

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 Vic Theatre

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DEMETRI MARTIN

WANDERING MIND TOUR



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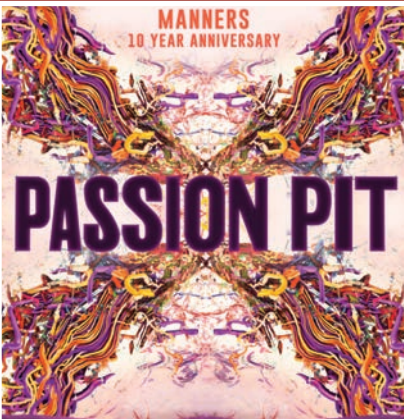


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SAVAGE LOVE

By Dan Savage

Now with extra lobster

Advice for Miss Pooper's husband

Q: Can I still be considered sex positive if I personally do not have sex? I've never had sex or masturbated—all my life, any type of sexual stimulation has been very painful and I've been unable to experience orgasm. I simply get a migraine and feel mildly nauseated instead. I am not looking for a possible solution, as I long ago accepted my fate and consequently avoid sex, such as by maintaining only sexless relationships. My question is simply whether I can still be considered sex positive if I do not enjoy or engage in sexual activity? —**PERSONALLY LOATHES UNPLEASANT SEX**

A: I consider myself cunnilingus positive, PLUS, despite the fact that I could not personally enjoy (and therefore have never engaged in) that particular sexual activity. While I don't think it would cause me physical pain, I would not be able to experience orgasm myself (through simultaneous self-stimulation) while performing cunnilingus, and my cunnilingus partner would be highly unlikely to experience orgasm either (due to my ineptness). If I can

nevertheless consider myself cunnilingus positive under the circumstances—if I can consider myself a cunnilingus advocate—you can consider yourself sex positive.

Q: About twice a week, my wife gets up from the dinner table to have a shit. She won't make the smallest effort to adjust the timing so we can finish our dinner conversation. She can't even wait for a natural break in the conversation. She will stand up and leave the room when I am making a point. Am I rightfully upset or do I just have to get over it? When I say something, she tells me it's unavoidable. —**DECIDEDLY UPSET MAN PETITIONS SAVAGE**

A: "Let her have her poop," said Zach Noe Towers, a comedian in Los Angeles who just walked into the cafe where I was writing this week's column. "His Miss Pooper isn't going to change her ways." I would only add this: Absent some other evidence—aural or olfactory—you can't know for sure that your wife actually left the room to take a shit. She could be in the bathroom scrolling through Twitter or checking

her Instagram DMs. In other words: taking a break from your shit, DUMPS, not shitting herself.

Q: My boyfriend goes to pieces whenever I am the least bit critical. I'm not a scold, and small things don't bother me. But when he does something thoughtless and I bring it to his attention, he starts beating up on himself and insists that I hate him and I'm going to leave him. I'm not sure how to handle this. —**BOYFRIEND ALWAYS WAILING LOUDLY**

A: Someone who leaps to *YOU HATE ME! YOU HATE ME!* when their partner wants to constructively process the tiniest conflict is being a manipulative shit, BAWL. Your boyfriend goes right to the self-lacerating (and fake) meltdown so that you'll hesitate to initiate discussion about a conflict or—god forbid—really confront him about some selfish, shitty, or inconsiderate thing he's done. As the parent of any toddler can tell you, tantrums continue so long as tantrums work.

Q: Santorum, DTMFA, pegging, GGG, ➔



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Dated: January 21, 2019.
VAN LIESHOUT LAW OFFICE
Attorneys for Plaintiff /s/David J. Van Lieshout State Bar No. 1012641
122 E. Main Street P.O. Box 186
Little Chute, WI 54140-0186
(920) 788-0800

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: D07106551 on January 16, 2019 (For Office Use Only) Under the Assumed Business Name of KESCO SECURITY with the business located at: 3041 HARTZELL STREET, EVANSTON, IL 60201 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: Owner/ Partner Full Name Complete Address BRIAN POST 3041 HARTZELL STREET EVANSTON, IL 60201, USA (2/14)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19000425 on January 24, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of WORDED BY DESIGN with the business located at: 3858 W. 124TH PL, ALSIP, IL 60803 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: TANEI-SHA FLEMING 3858 W. 124TH PL ALSIP, IL 60803, USA (2/21)

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Dominick D. rocks.
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VALENTINE'S DAY

- ♥ Jackie, I so love you on this Valentine's Day. - Miguel
- ♥ Baby Doll, be mine forever. I love you. Johnny.
- ♥ I cherish Shawnta always and forever, love Kendal.
- ♥ To Tim: Great butt, great friend, best husband. Thank you for everything.
- ♥ Donut, I want to fill you up and eat you.
- ♥ Can't find a butter girl.
- ♥ Hey dum dum you're in the paper, love ya Lizzie
- ♥ You: your eyes crossed the table into mine and you become the only person I wanted to know. You were deep in conversation with my friend, but later offered to buy me a drink. You asked what I was reading. You asked, can I kiss you later? You asked, can I kiss you now? You were the first stranger I ever went home with and you started every sentence with your hands. Me: drunk on Irish car bombs and adrenaline, I slid my underwear off right there in your living room and shoved them into my coat pocket. I didn't go home for two days. When: Friday, January 6, 2017. Where: Some bar. You: Man. Me: Woman.
- ♥ May 2019 bring us \$\$\$, more snorkeling, & LOVE

- ♥ M. WHATEVER "THIS" IS, I LIKE IT (AND YOU).
- ♥ Little bunny, small and quiet, but such a biggggg heart
- ♥ alice, may you warm my loins forever. love, your bean
- ♥ Babe, I still have foodstamps left 867-5309
- ♥ Tom, It's valentines, I love you, and that ass hot
- ♥ CC, Pumpkin, muffin, best cat dad: you got a girlfriend?
- ♥ Beautiful curly salvadoreña, we ordered same nitro brew , espero verte - coffee lovers
- ♥ Dear Jermaine, I love you honey, Always and forever, Tracy.
- ♥ Julie, Now we're here and we've only just begun This will be our year Took a long time to come -Alex
- ♥ My dearest Andrew H. you are always my purple rain!
- ♥ You still make my heart fly Captain Daddypants- FunnyHoney
- ♥ When we first met you shared your treat, Years later you are still so sweet. I love you now as I loved you then You're my lover, my partner and my best friend. So I am wondering Nini, Would you consider marrying me?

- ♥ Happy 25th anniversary year Jean! WOW, 25! — Love, Tracy
- ♥ You helped me move apartments in the rain and took me on a boat tour, something I never thought I'd do. Two years later I've never been happier. ♥
- ♥ Uno Gigante Chocolati, Happy 2019 V-Day - Team Johnson! Caramel Gurl!
- ♥ Love, See you at sunset. -Mini
- ♥ where has the time has gone—I love you Pete!
- ♥ Me oh my, you caught my eye. Luv +
- ♥ Meet by the water, frostbit-ten lover - Annie is urs
- ♥ Mom, Here's to lots of travel memories. Happy VDay! Erica



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SAVAGE LOVE

continued from 40
the Campsite Rule, monogamish—you've coined a lot of interesting and useful terms over the years, Dan, but it's been a while since you rolled out a new one. You can consider this a challenge. —NEO-NEOLOGISMS, PLEASE!

A: I've got two for you, NNP. "Harnies" (pronounced like "carnies"): Vanilla guys who attend big gay leather/rubber/fetish events like International Mr. Leather or Folsom Street Fair in harnesses. A harnie owns just one piece of fetish gear—his harness, usually purchased on the day of the event, often in a neon color, never to be worn during sex—and pairs his harness with booty shorts and sneakers. Kinky guys old enough to remember when vanilla guys wouldn't be caught dead at fetish events

prefer having harnies around to the kink shaming that used to be rampant even in the gay community. And most kinky guys are too polite to tell harnies that harnesses aren't merely decorative. Someone should be able to hold on to your harness while they're fucking you or add ropes if they want to tie you down. So if your harness is made out of stretchy fabric—like lime-green Lycra—then it's not a harness, it's a sports bra. Kinky guys are also too polite to tell harnies when they're wearing their harnesses upside down or backward. "With Extra Lobster": There are food carts in Iceland that sell delicious lobster stew, lobster rolls, and lobster sandwiches. The menu at the cart my husband and I kept returning to when we visited Reykjavik included this item: "With Extra Lob-

ster." You could order your lobster with extra lobster! Lobster is a luxurious and decadent treat, and getting extra lobster with your lobster kicks the luxury and decadence up a big notch. "With extra lobster" struck me as the perfect dirty euphemism for something. It could be something very specific—say, someone sticks their tongue out and licks your balls while they're deep-throating your cock. We could describe that as a blow job with extra lobster. Or it could be a general expression meaning "more of whatever hot thing gets you off." I'm open to your suggested definitions of "with extra lobster." 

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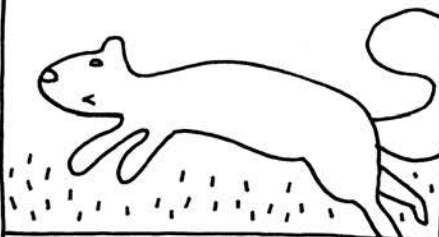
PRAIRIE POTHOLE

ROBERT and I WERE HANGING OUT ON the LAWN OF the DEAF CHURCH



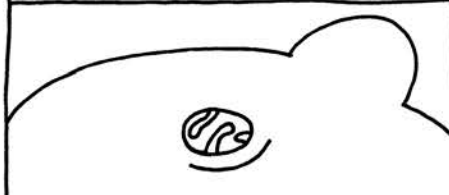
HEY JOHN,
LOOK at
THIS!

IN the BUSHES WAS A DEAD SQUIRREL



WE SQUATTED DOWN TO OBSERVE IT ...

STRANGE WHITE WORMS CRAWLED IN and OUT OF ITS EMPTY EYES



John P. 1-21

I WAS TRANSPORTED BETWEEN WORLDS

Violet PRIVATE EYE By Melissa Mendes



P.L. DERMES IN "PUSTULE"

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